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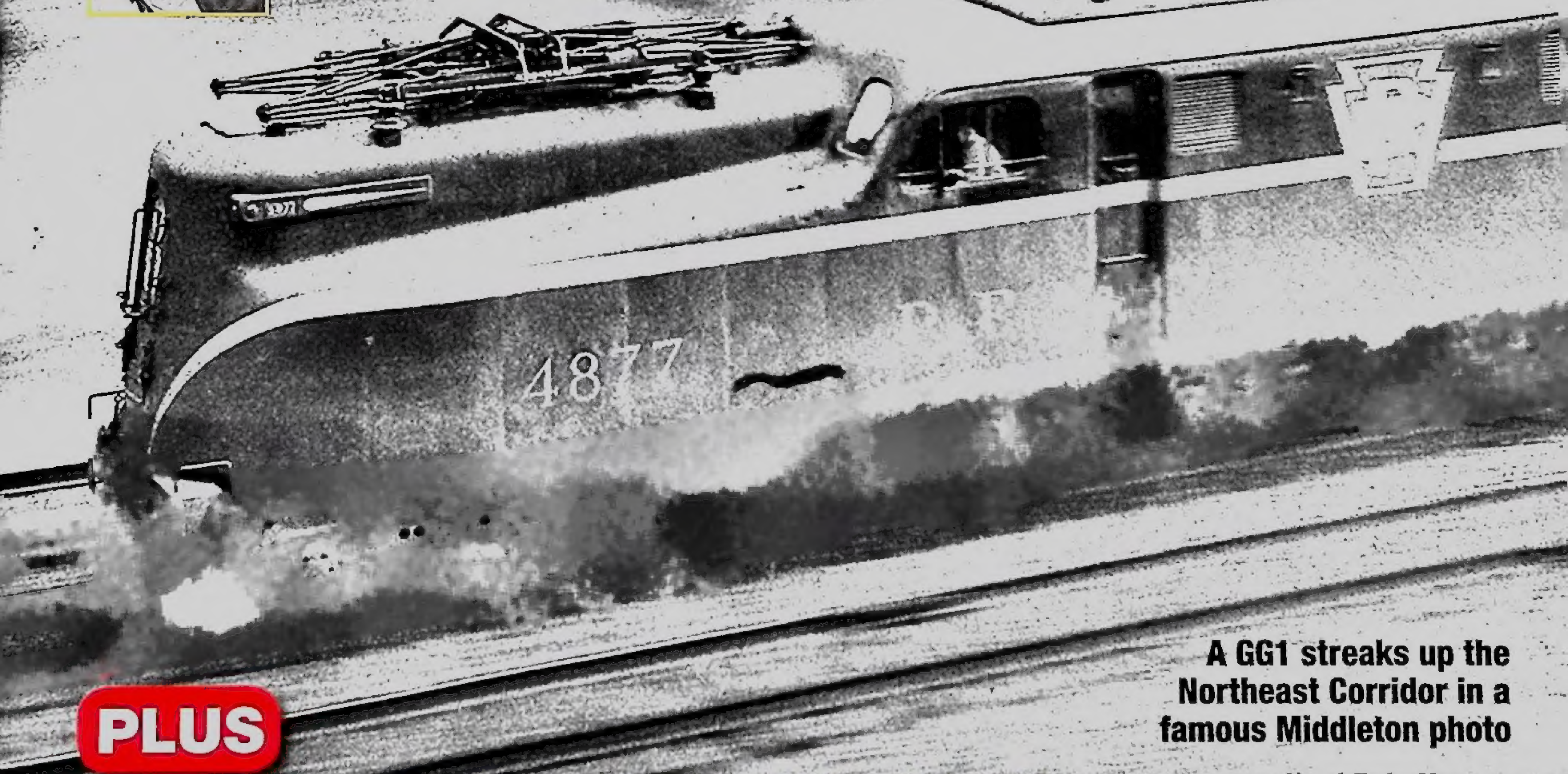
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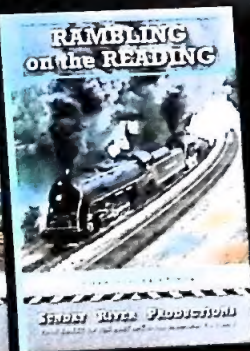
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 Diane Laszka-Swanke

Contributing Illustrator
 Bill Metzger

Librarian
 Thomas E. Hoffmann

Publisher
 Kevin P. Keefe

Editorial
 Phone: (262) 796-8776
 E-mail: editor@classictrainsmag.com
 Fax: (262) 798-6468
 P.O. Box 1612
 Waukesha, WI 53187-1612

Display Advertising Sales
 Phone: (888) 558-1544, ext. 625
 E-mail: adsales@classictrainsmag.com
 Fax: (262) 796-0126

Customer Service
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Seatrain: ahead of its time

For some readers, Bob Mohowski's article on Seatrain Lines beginning on page 64 may at first seem like an odd inclusion in a magazine that focuses on mid-20th century railroading. Sure, Seatrain containers were carried on flatcars in intermodal trains, but the company was an ocean cargo carrier, right?

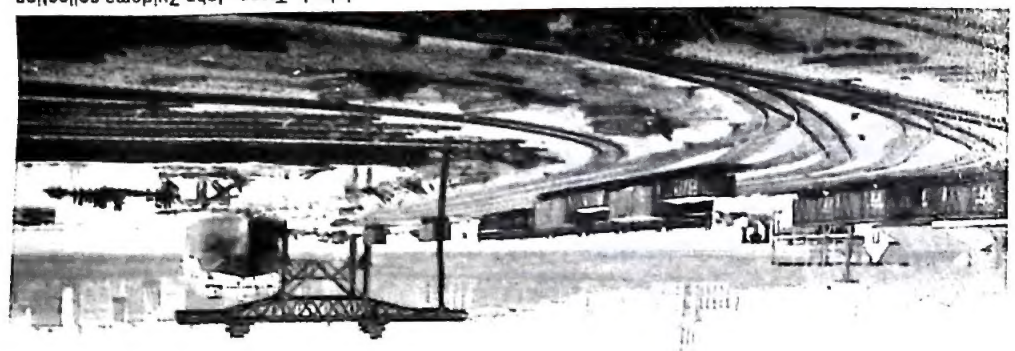
Well, as Bob explains, there's a lot more to the story, starting with the fact that Seatrain was founded to move cargo the same way railroads did—in railroad cars. Indeed, for most of its five-decade life, hauling freight cars over the open sea formed the backbone of the company's business. Though revolutionary when introduced in 1929, this business model was by the mid-1960s no longer a formula for success.

A variety of factors combined to sink the Seatrain concept, including containerization. The company did transition to that now-standard shipping method (remember those Seatrain boxes?) and even prospered before a complex array of forces pushed it into liquidation.

That Seatrain's original business of hauling rail cars on ships should succumb to containerization is ironic, for the practice was itself an early form of containerization. In that regard, Seatrain was truly ahead of its time.

Robert S. McGonigal

A ship awaits loading at Seatrain's Edgewater, N.J., pier. Behind the four-car cut of boxcars and gondolas is a string of flatcars on which loading cradles are temporarily stacked.



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Spring 2011 • Volume 12 Number 1



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N&W's Keokuk, Iowa-bound "Hawkeye" freight switches at Marblehead, Ill., at dawn on January 22, 1967. J. David Ingles photo.

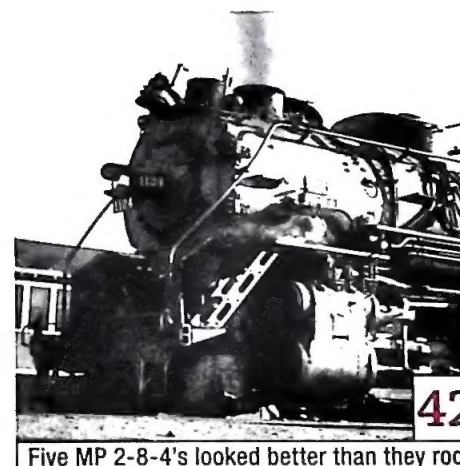
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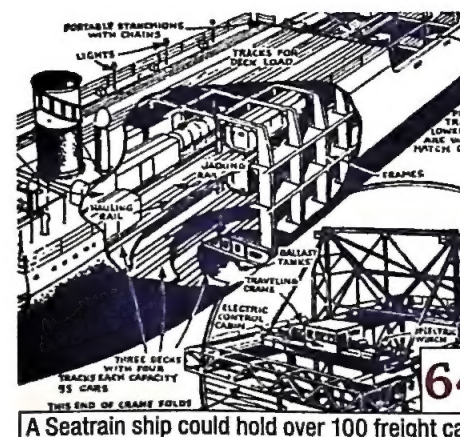
Iowa traction: High on Middleton's interest list



Short locals linked remote towns with the world



Five MP 2-8-4's looked better than they rode



A Seatrain ship could hold over 100 freight cars

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On the cover: Pennsylvania GG1 electric 4877 tears north with a heavy Washington-New York express near Bowie, Md., in 1963 (see pages 22-33). *William D. Middleton photo.*

CLASSIC TRAINS is published quarterly in January (Spring), April (Summer), July (Fall), and October (Winter), (ISSN 1527-0718, USPS No. 019-502) by Kalmbach Publishing Co., 21027 Crossroads Circle, P.O. Box 1612, Waukesha, WI 53187-1612. Periodicals postage paid at Waukesha, Wis., and at additional offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to CLASSIC TRAINS, Kalmbach Publishing Co., 21027 Crossroads Circle, P.O. Box 1612, Waukesha, WI 53187-1612. Canada Publication Mail Agreement No. 40010760.

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Contributors

RICHARD FRANCAVIGLIA ["A Half Century of Difference at Dominguez Junction," pages 74-75], grew up in Los Angeles but has since lived throughout the U.S. After a 40-year career as an architectural historian, environmental planner, and university administrator and professor in history and geography, he now is semi-retired and conducts research for his consulting company, Geo-Graphic Designs, in Salem, Ore. In addition to many academic publications, Richard co-edited Kalmbach's 1977 *Railroad Station Planbook* and authored two railroad-related books: *Mining Town Trolleys: A History of Arizona's Warren-Bisbee Railway* (1983), and *Over the Range: A History of the Promontory Summit Route of the Pacific Railroad* (2008). This is his first article in *CLASSIC TRAINS*.

LARRY GOOLSBY ["Bird's-Eye View: 'West Jax' Shops," pages 58-59] has long been active in the Atlantic Coast Line and Seaboard Air Line Historical Society. He researched Bird's-Eye View photos of ACL's Wilmington, N.C., facilities [Summer 2005 *CLASSIC TRAINS*] and Jacksonville Terminal [Fall '06] and also wrote a *Fallen Flags* essay on the ACL [Spring '09].

J. DAVID INGLES ["A Ride on the Hawk-eye," pages 46-54, and "The Keokuk Branch's 15 Minutes of Fame," pages 55-57], senior editor of *CLASSIC TRAINS*, "commuted" on the *Wabash Cannon Ball* in the 1960s ["Cannon Ball Runs," Winter 2009 CT] and counts the vast majority of Wabash main lines on his "mileage log," exceptions being the east and west ends of the Toledo-Chicago route and the Brunswick, Mo.-Council Bluffs, Iowa, line. In addition to Kenny Davis and Van McCullough, Dave thanks Rob Adams, Chet French, Gary Roe, and 52-year friend Dick Wallin for their assistance in preparing these articles.

KEVIN P. KEEFE ["Great Photographers: William D. Middleton," pages 22-33], the publisher of *CLASSIC TRAINS*, read his first William D. Middleton book, *The Interurban Era*, in 1965 at age 14. He met Middleton a decade later, appropriately enough on a South Shore train. "I was riding a CERA fantrip to South Bend, a re-creation of the old *St. Joe Valley Limited*, and I introduced myself to Bill while we stood in line for a hot dog in the impromptu 'dining car.'" Kevin, who also serves as

publisher of *ASTRONOMY* and *DISCOVER* magazines, has had four previous bylines in CT, on photographers Robert A. Hadley [Winter 2003] and Jim Scribbins [Winter '07], and "fallen flag" railroads Pere Marquette Railway [Winter '05] and Chicago & Eastern Illinois [Spring '10].

HUGO LACKMAN ["Missouri Pacific's 'Lemon' Berkshires," pages 42-45], worked in engine service for MP until 1985, then for Steamtown in Scranton, Pa., through 1987, and on the Georgetown Loop tourist line until 1998. Drawn to the craft by his first cab ride, as a kid in 1934 on an MP 4-6-0, Hugo totaled 56 years in locomotive cabs. This is his second CT feature, after one on his beloved MP Ten-Wheelers in Summer 2007. He and his wife had retired to Woodland Park, Colo., where he died in 2008.

ROBERT E. MOHOWSKI ["Seatrains: Railroad or Steamship Line?" pages 64-73] grew up near the Erie and Susquehanna railroads in New Jersey. Once he became interested in the technical aspects of train operation, he was delighted to find that many towermen, agent/operators, and signalmen didn't mind visits or being questioned about the tasks they performed to keep trains moving. Gifts of old employee timetables, rule books, train and bulletin orders, and copies of *The Official Railway Guide* were eagerly collected and carefully perused, helping him make sense of a complex industry. Bob spent 34 years in public education and, with his wife Pat, raised two sons who share his rail interest. He has written three books on railroads, including a history of the Susquehanna. Bob gratefully acknowledges the help of Seatrain Captains James J. McNamara and Dennis Schroder as well as Arthur Donovan for his academic work on U.S. maritime history; Tom Flagg and John Teichmoeller of the Rail-Marine Information Group; marine historian David Hendrickson; NYS&W employees Tony Vitale and the late Charley Sutton; and rail historians Richard Taylor and William S. Young. Bob lives near Saratoga Springs, N.Y., and belongs to a variety of railroad organizations and other historical groups. This is his fourth article, and his first feature, in CT.



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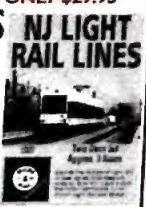


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STAN RHINE ["Burlington's 'Night Crawler,'" pages 34–40], a University of Colorado graduate who lived in several Centennial State cities over the years, is retired from being a professor, curator, and forensic anthropologist at the University of New Mexico. Primarily a narrow-gauge fan, he was one of the "moppets" who in the early '60s hung around the new Colorado Railroad Museum in Golden. He first rode Burlington's Denver–Billings train in 1954 and made frequent trips on it in the '60s—"the best, but not the fastest way" to see family in Billings. Still a resident of Albuquerque, he currently writes on railroad technological history; this is his first byline in *CLASSIC TRAINS*.

JIM SHAUGHNESSY ["Scientific Streamlining," pages 60–63] contributes a "Shaughnessy Files" article to each issue of *CLASSIC TRAINS*. He has been contributing photos and



articles to *TRAINS* magazine since 1955, the most recent being a feature on D&H's "Toys for Tots" train in the December 2010 issue. He's pictured above aboard Vermont Railway's "Customer Appreciation Special" in September 2010.

R. R. "DICK" WALLIN ["C&M: Built on Coal," pages 18–21], grew up around St. Louis but acquired an interest in C&M after graduating from Millikin University in Decatur, Ill., and settling in nearby Springfield, where he had a career in accounting with a public utility until retiring in 1993. While researching C&M material, he discovered CP&STL corporate records, thought to be long lost, which spurred his interest in writing a C&M book, which he wound up coordinating with rail historian friends John Szwajkart and the late Paul Stringham. Dick and his wife of 47 years, Lorine (whose mother, the late Anna Mae Batterton, was born in 1922 on board a CP&STL train!), live in Rochester, Ill. This is Dick's fourth byline with us, beginning with a Wabash piece in Fall 2002 followed by an IC story in Summer 2007 and a tale about a southern shortline safari in Winter 2008. **T**

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Shipwreck on the New Haven



New Haven

The great hurricane of September 21, 1938, inflicted apocalyptic damage on the New England coast line. Nearly 600 people perished. The New Haven Railroad, with miles of shoreline trackage, sustained heavy losses. Evidence of the severity of the storm surge is the lighthouse tender *Tulip*, washed ashore onto NH property at New London, Conn. A four-wheel rail crane is on the scene, but the wreckmaster will need something with a lot more heft to clear the tracks.

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Abbey pictures to rail photo center

Wallace W. Abbey ["Great Photographers," Summer 2010 CLASSIC TRAINS] and his family have donated his 15,000 rail photos to the Center for Railroad Photography & Art. To preserve, process, and present the collection, the Center received the annual \$10,000 TRAINS magazine preservation grant. Meanwhile, the Center's annual "Conversations about Photography" symposium is set for April 15-17 at Lake Forest College north of Chicago. To see some Abbey photos, or learn about the symposium, go to railphoto-art.org.

Wallace W. Abbey

Nothing to it

Building a steam locomotive involved a careful ballet of thousands of components, each added according to a precise sequence. Scrapping one was simpler: Workers at Sheffield Steel in Kansas City just started at the rear of Frisco 4-8-2 4308 one day in April 1953 and worked their way forward.



James A. Williams



Museum of Transportation

St. Louis unveils *Eagle* parlor-obs car

After four years of meticulous restoration, St. Louis' Museum of Transportation unveiled Missouri Pacific parlor-observation car 750 in December. Built by St. Louis-based American Car & Foundry in 1940, the car brought up the rear of MP's *Missouri River Eagle* for 20 years. Until 1945, one of its regular passengers was Missouri Sen. Harry S. Truman.



Link's family album

O. Winston Link's remarkable night photos of Norfolk & Western steam are legendary. "OWL" died in 2001, but his younger brother, Al, has assembled an intimate family photo album. Don't expect a lot of train pictures, but you'll see the Link family for a century, with emphasis on Winston. The book includes photos of family artifacts too. Signed limited editions are available for \$34 plus shipping only from the O. Winston Link Museum, www.linkmuseum.org, (540) 982-LINK.

Obituary

Donald Duke

Renowned rail photographer, publisher, and author Donald Duke, 81, died September 27, 2010, at his San Marino, Calif., home. He grew up in Pasadena, often riding Pacific Electric cars with his father. Lured by nearby narrow-gauge railroads, Duke attended Colorado College, graduating in 1951. He preferred action photos, particularly those that told a story. Duke established Golden West Books in 1960; all told, he published more than 150 titles. Duke was active in numerous railroad historical societies. He was the Great Photographer in *CLASSIC TRAINS*' Winter 2009 issue.



Steve Crise photo

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George W. Hamlin



Ron Flanary

Queen City postscripts: By July 8, 1968, the Clifton Avenue crossing at Winton Place (left) is closed, but the gateman's shanty still stands as a Penn Central transfer passes behind an F7/GP9/SD45 trio. L&N 99, the *Pan-American*, stops at Covington Union Station August 9, 1963 (right).

Winton Place remembered

Thanks for publishing Denny Hamilton's excellent "Winton Place: Queen City Gathering Spot" [pages 22–31, Winter]. Like Denny, I also spent considerable "formative years" time there. Since I moved away prior to being old enough to drive, my first "solo" trips (other than in the family car) were via bicycle and Cincinnati Transit. I visited again in August 1966 and watched the evening trains with local fans. My arrival coincided with that of the dome coaches on N&W's *Powhatan Arrow*, the Queen City's first in regular service. The photo above is from when the present alignment, responsible for the station's closure, was being built,

George W. Hamlin, Fairfax, Va.

I passed through Winton Place four to eight times a year going to or from college in Tiffin, Ohio, during 1945–49, using L&N between my hometown of Louisville, Ky., and Cincinnati; the trainboard would've been much larger then. I once rode an NYC train from Cincy to Detroit, and also had ridden B&O's *Cincinnatian* when it was the beautiful premier train between Cincy and Baltimore. My last ride home, on NYC after graduation, was in coaches once assigned to the *Mercury*.

Gerald Kummer, Pleasant Hill, Tenn.

Denny Hamilton's feature was first-rate. As stated, passenger trains to the south and west didn't use Winton Place. Those of C&O and L&N, for example, followed the same path out of CUT across C&O's Ohio River bridge into Covington, Ky., whose Union Station was a Winton Place equivalent. It was a street-level structure with stairs leading to four main tracks, which funneled down to two across the bridge. As late as 1959, Covington saw six daily C&O trains and 10 on L&N, and until 1966 it still saw a dozen daily, like Winton Place mostly in the mornings and evenings. There was also a constant flow of freights, including C&O road trains and coal transfers between L&N's big DeCoursey Yard to the south and roads such as B&O and NYC. Covington Union Station still stands, restored and adapted to non-railroad use. It didn't offer quite the show Winton Place did, but was still worth a visit.

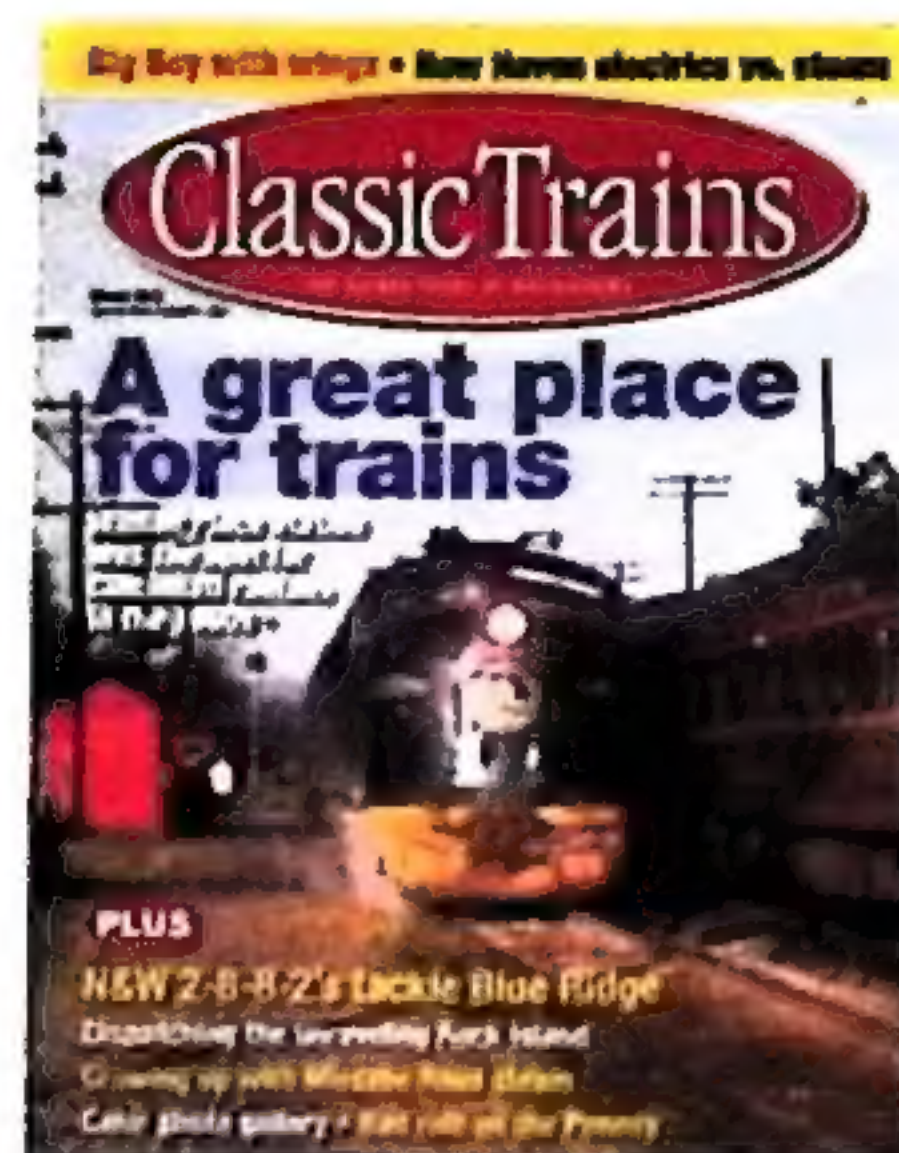
Ron Flanary, Big Stone Gap, Va.

Winton Place indeed seemed to have a hard time maintaining an identity, but it always changed names for a purpose at the time. B&O in 1872 funded a

new 7-mile line up the east side of the valley, jointly with a road that would become part of the Big Four. A new local station was named Spring Grove, then the name of the locality (as well as the main road from downtown, today still Spring Grove Avenue). CH&D, however, already had a "Spring Grove" station just six blocks away, so as the new trotting venue Chester Park became popular, the station was renamed. By

1893 streetcars had taken away local riders, and since the community had adopted the name Winton Place, the station was renamed. It was little used in the 1920s and was to be closed when Cincinnati Union Terminal opened in 1933, but, surprise—Winton Place became a convenient alternative to driving downtown, and gained new popularity.

After closure in 1967 for the new track alignment and highway work, the station remained, abandoned. As the new-trackage fill began to rise, threatening the structure, our local preservation society, the Miami Purchase Association, raised funds and took action. MPA had gained use of a large tract of land in Sharon Woods, a county park,



and two early homes were already undergoing restoration there. Winton Place station was a good fit, and at almost the last minute it was taken down, in panels, and re-erected. The planned park village was to replicate a mid-19th-century town, and the depot, in its 1879 enlarged configuration, would be the newest structure. Winton Place was too new a name to use, so it went back to "Chester Park," which it carried in the 1870s. In retrospect, we should have chosen "Spring Grove."

Cornelius W. Hauck, Cincinnati, Ohio

I was a frequent Winton Place visitor from 1947 until fall 1961 when I went to college, either to pick up relatives from northern Ohio or leaving to visit them. In spring '59, after receiving my driver's license, I decided to photograph the morning arrivals and departures there. Upon arrival I found mail trucks from all the suburban branches backed up to the west-side platform, to take pouches off the trains. This saved a day in transit time as opposed to taking them down to the Postal Annex next to CUT.

T. R. Lammers, Omaha, Neb.

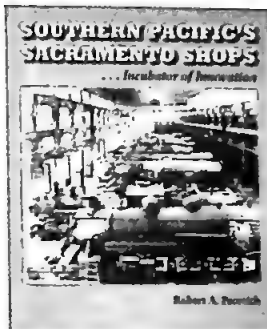
During the '50s I spent many hours at Winton Place watching the intense activity. I used to send mail to my fiancée at Quincy, Ohio, by putting it on the night Cincinnati-Toledo RPO, and she would have it the next morning.

J. Robert Wayman, Downers Grove, Ill.

The steam-powered train in the photo at the top of page 25 could not have been N&W's *Cavalier*, as it ran no farther west than Portsmouth, Ohio, as of April 28, 1957. Likely it was the *Powhatan Arrow*, which in July 1958 was due out of Winton Place at 8:20 a.m.

Bob Wayner, Brooklyn, N.Y.

"Queen City Gathering Spot" is not the first time the Winton Place depot has been in a Kalmbach publication. The July and August 1939 issues of *MODEL RAILROADER* carried a two-part article by Mel Thornburgh describing the construction of an O-scale model of it. Until 1959 Thornburgh, a B&O claims agent in Chillicothe, Ohio, wrote many articles about scratch-building B&O, and other roads', locomotives,



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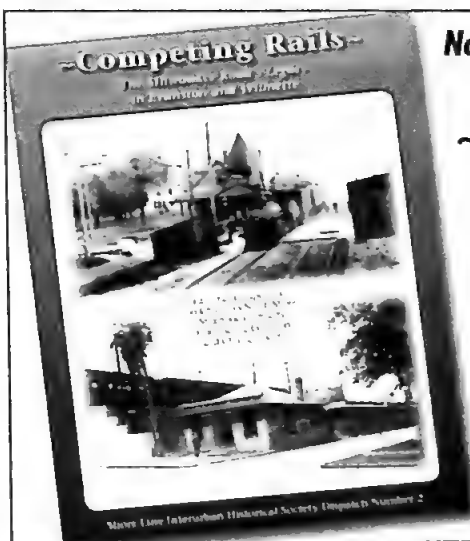
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cars, and equipment. Some of his models are in the B&O Museum. I was delighted to learn the depot has survived.

James C. Haskell, Chama, N.Mex.

Rock Island encounter

Regarding "Night Chief at Des Moines" [pages 54-57], I've really enjoyed Dan Sabin's stories through the years. I grew up at the same time in Waunakee, Wis., on the Chicago & North Western, and would spend hours watching the trains set out and pick up cars. My only encounter with the Rock Island was in Missouri on a family trip. Tracks paralleled our road, and soon I noticed a short but steep hill as the rails followed the terrain. The map did not name the railroad, but I soon found out, as a distant headlight turned out to be on a Rock Island GP35 leading a cab unit and a high-nose Geep, in "elephant style," on a freight. I wished we could've turned back so I could see that train negotiating that hill.

John Lemberger, Milwaukee, Wis.

Dan Sabin mentions Homer Day, RI's East Iowa Road Foreman of Engines. I had the privilege to work for, and be a friend of, Homer's while I was an employee, and it was probably his influence that got me hired. Homer had a simple philosophy: You were paid a day's wages and you gave a day's work

according to the company's policies and rules. If you did that, you had no problems with him. But he knew when to bend, too. One time he had to call me in for an explanation of a situation, but knowing I'd been working 12 hours on and 8 or 10 off for several weeks, he concluded by saying, "You look like death warmed over; get the hell out of here and go get some sleep."

Steve Lasher, Jeffersonville, Ind.

Heirs apparent

In the biographical sketch on page 6 for Gil Bennett, author of "Big Boy . . . With Wings!" [pages 32-35], he comments that the late famed rail artist Howard Fogg deemed him his "heir apparent." That was a gracious and kind remark by Howard, but perhaps not unique. In April 1984 I introduced artist Mike Danneman to Howard. Mike, who soon would join the Kalmbach art staff and later become TRAINS' Art Director, had brought samples of his work, and at Fogg's home, after looking over Mike's work, Howard shouted up the stairs to his wife, "Maggie, come here, I think I have met my successor!" Mike and I think Howard, being the gentleman he was, perhaps encouraged, inspired, and supported all young artists that he could. And aren't we all the beneficiaries of that today?

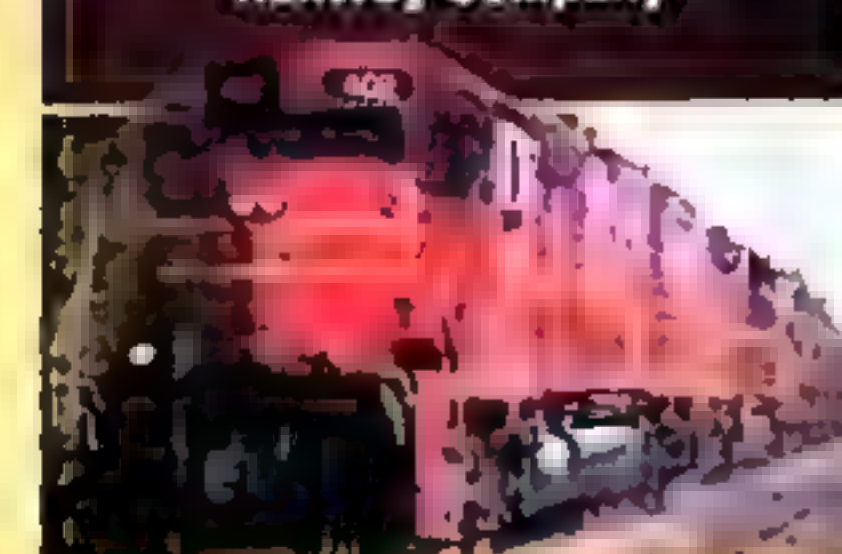
Steve Patterson, Arvada, Colo.

Lasting DMIR tributes

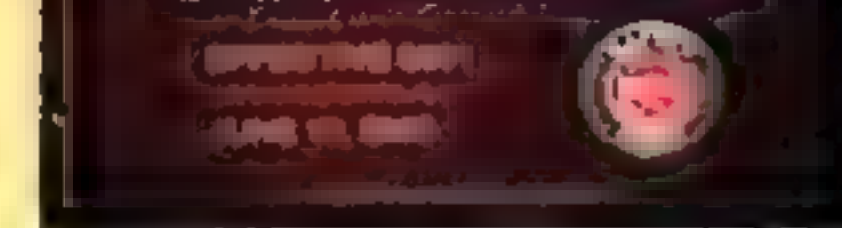
Brian Belanger's wonderful childhood recollection, "Growing Up With the Missabe Road" [pages 36-43], centered on Fayal Yard in northeastern Minnesota, reminded me of DM&IR's final employee timetable, from June 19, 2003. Departing from its normal practice of using only modern images in company publications, for the back cover the Missabe Road used a 1954 image of "Mallet" 221 working hard with a loaded train on the 0.75-percent grade of Leonidas Hill just north of Fayal Yard. This photo fits beautifully with author Belanger's memories and reflects the tremendous pride that DM&IR employees had for the Yellowstones, even in 2003. After Canadian National announced it would buy DM&IR, the Missabe again selected a 2-8-8-4 for a prominent viewing venue, this time on the railroad's 2004 wall calendar, Missabe's last. Remembering this final timetable was easy for me, as the railroad graciously used an image of mine on the cover, depicting two SD40-3's lugging empty ore cars upgrade near Two Harbors.

David C. Schauer, Duluth, Minn.

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Lasting CNJ monument

I enjoyed Peter Brill's "Fallen Flags Remembered" entry on Jersey Central [pages 18-21]. In the late 1930s, my grandmother and I often rode Reading's *Crusader* between her home near Philadelphia and mine in New York City. (We both rode free—I was under age 5, and she had a Pullman pass.) Our Jersey City terminus was CNJ's riverfront edifice, where we transferred to the ferry. Two years ago I was pleasantly surprised to find the terminal building spruced up as the visitor center and embarkation point for boats to the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. The tracks are gone, of course, but the station platforms remain, as do the gates, with departure trainboards up for such trains as CNJ's *Blue Comet*, B&O's *Royal Blue*, and Reading's *Wall Street*.

James Ransom, San Diego, Calif.

Fort Wayne's flyer

I was surprised to see one of my photos in Ralph S. Podas' "Bad Ride on the Pennsy" [pages 72-75]. Thank you! The article was of special interest to me as I rode PRR 7, the *Red Bird*, to Chicago several times while stationed at Great Lakes Naval Air Station north of the city. With one of the fastest schedules east of Chicago, the engineers had to run 100 mph at times to keep on schedule. On one trip I clocked us doing 105 mph for three miles.

David Allen Bauer, Fort Wayne, Ind.

As a high-schooler in Lansing, Mich., in the '50s, I'd be at the Grand Trunk Western depot every weekday evening to watch Toronto-Chicago train No. 17 arrive and depart, and got into many pleasant conversations with waiting passengers. GTW's chief ticket clerk, Mr. Beneck, was a mild-mannered, efficient, and competent employee, and I had many conversations with him. Once I made a charitable remark about humanity in general, and an uncharacteristic scowl came over his face as he said, "You wouldn't say that if you had to deal with the public." I was taken aback, but I'm sure Mr. Beneck had met his share of Bob Podas types (deceased brother of the author).

Regarding Bob Podas' Fort Wayne boarding experience, the *Red Bird* was

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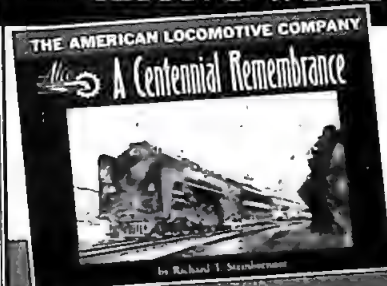
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not reversed in Detroit because there was no place to turn a train near the Fort Street depot, so the consist would have the lounge on one end, with the diner and parlor (adjacent) on the other, and the coaches in between; the baggage car was always behind the engine. (This is also how PRR handled the New York-Philadelphia "Clockers.") At Fort Wayne, there was probably a station announcement of car positioning, and it would have been easier to walk the platform than through the train. The evident reason Mr. Podas did not do this is that he used up the time making a self-important scene.

Jerry A. Pinkepank, Seattle, Wash.

Riding Denver's streetcars

The Denver Tramway System ["Dual Gauge and Decimals in Denver," in "Car Stop," pages 84-85] was a part of my school-age years in Denver. The "Num-

ber 14" line ran past my high school and within a block of my junior high, along Colfax Avenue east toward its Aurora terminal. The "13" line was close to three of our family's four houses. At age 6 or 7, I'd sit awake in my room on Garfield Street and watch up Eleventh Avenue to see the cars go by on Madison, but that line was one of the first to be changed to trolley buses. When we were small, a trip downtown on the 13 car was a dress-up event, and Dad used the line to commute to work at the Burke-Donaldson-Taylor Building diagonally opposite Union Station.

I can recall not only the sight and sounds of the well-kept yellow cars but also the smells—varnished wood window frames, rattan seats, residual odor of the mixture used to clean the floors, and the ozone created as the trolley wheel sparked on curves and junctions!

As teens, we and our Saturday dates

would take the interurban to Golden for a climb up Table Mountain overlooking the town and have a picnic lunch.

Only rarely did we ride via the northerly, narrow-gauge route, for this involved a lot of street running through North Denver before getting into open territory near Arvada. These cars were smaller than the standard-gauge cars, and their wood side frames seesawed back and forth at any speed.

Gray Dales, New Market, Md.

Got a comment?

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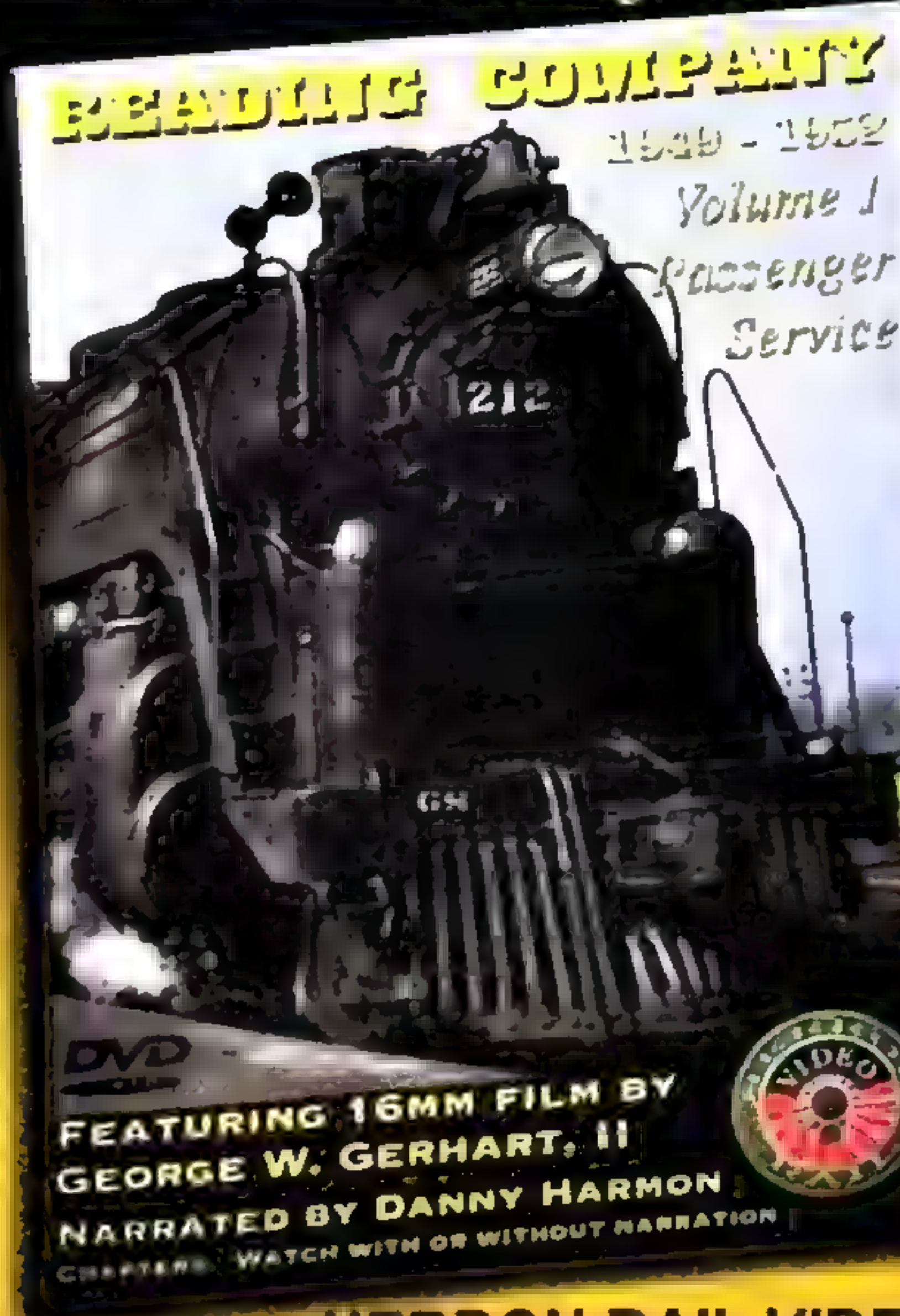
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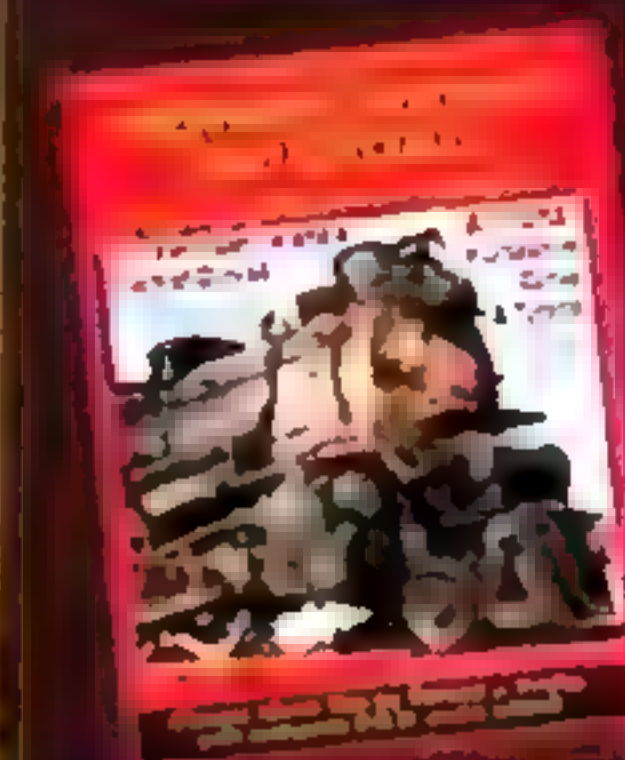
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Canadian Pacific train 1, *The Canadian*, ceases to stop at the Rocky Mountain resort town of Banff, Alta., on June 30, 1964. Launched on April 24, 1955, the Montreal-Vancouver through train still more or less survives after nine years as part of the "World's Greatest Travel System." Change is coming, however, in the form of a new "CP Rail" made in 1968, takeover by VIA Rail Canada's Greater Rail, a switch to a Canadian Pacific route out of Toronto not Montreal, and 200 miles north of Banff to 1968, conversion of the historic stainless-steel rolling stock to a new all-steel, lightweight, low-cost design. And too VIA is getting some of the cars and coaches to Banff and other style accommodations with new types of rooms. Thanks to the *Rocky Mountain* Express, Banff, Alberta, you get still the same old Banff, but a new Banff.



Chicago & Illinois Midland: built on coal

How a local line tripled in size, and briefly was widely known for running steam



Although many railroads bore the names of towns they served or wanted to, the Chicago & Illinois Midland never reached Chicago, nor did it plan to. When the line was bought by a coal company in 1905, it first was named Central Illinois Railway, but that caused confusion with the nearby Illinois Central. So the new name was formulated from the coal firm's co-owners, Chicago Edison and Illinois Midland Coal. The former was a property of utility and interurban magnate Samuel Insull, while IMC was jointly owned by Chicago Edison and Peabody Coal, which in turn was owned by Insull's friend Francis Peabody.

C&IM's lineage traces to the Pawnee Railroad, which opened in 1889 from that town west to a connection with the IC (at first, Pawnee Junction, later—logically—Cimic) and employed an ex-IC 1853-vintage 4-4-0. In 1892 the Pawnee extended west to Auburn and a Chicago & Alton connection. Built to serve local agricultural customers, the Pawnee gained longevity with the discovery of vast coalfields under the farmlands.

Under Insull and Peabody, C&IM was completely rebuilt; in 1906 it was extended east to Taylorville and a connection with the Wabash. (A further extension to Assumption, on IC's original line, was contemplated but never built.) In 1917, a short extension was built beyond Auburn to a connection, called Compro, with Chicago & North Western's recently completed Southern Illinois coal line. This was an important link, as one of Insull's newest Chicago-



Two photos, Walter A. Peters; R. R. Wallin collection

Two of C&IM's nine ex-ACL 2-10-2's are pictured at Springfield, sporting the ex-NYC tenders C&IM had bought to retrofit these engines' predecessor 2-10-2's, acquired from the Wabash.

area power stations was on C&NW.

C&IM, just "the Midland" to many, rolled along into the early '20s. Insull's money had provided two new 2-8-0's plus some 4-4-0's of uncertain parentage and secondhand 2-6-0's and 2-8-0's. Several passenger trains ran, mostly accommodations for coal miners.

A new era dawned in the mid-1920s, and little C&IM would never be the same. A neighbor road, the Chicago, Peoria & St. Louis, had always been in financial distress. Running from Peoria to St. Louis, with a branch from Havana, Ill., due south to Jacksonville, it served mostly small villages and had suffered from years of deferred maintenance. It was about to be abandoned when Commonwealth Edison realized it would be a ready-made coal route to several proposed power stations.

For reviving the CP&StL, however,

Insull demanded a piece of flesh. Reasoning he might need extra space to install high-voltage power lines, he required each lineside landowner to donate strips of property to the railroad, creating a 100-foot right of way. It was a tough sell, but eventually all the landowners capitulated.

Gaining a major gateway

Thus in early 1926 did C&IM more than triple in size, gaining a major gateway in Peoria, at the time served by a dozen Class 1's. By obtaining trackage rights on IC from Cimic to Springfield, C&IM linked its original Taylorville line with its new Peoria route. (The leg from Pekin to East Peoria and Peoria was over Peoria & Pekin Union, jointly owned by several Class 1's.) Eventually, interchanges at Barr, near Athens, with C&NW and at Alton's Ridgely Yard in

Springfield allowed the Cimic-Auburn-Compro line to be abandoned.

The remainder of CP&StL did not interest C&IM. The Jacksonville branch became the Jacksonville & Havana, while the line south of Springfield became the Chicago, Springfield & St. Louis. Neither lasted long—J&H folded in 1937 and CS&StL in 1941.

CP&StL's locomotives likewise got the cold shoulder from C&IM; three 1913-vintage 2-8-0's went to the Green Bay & Western and everything else to scrap. Motive-power needs of the suddenly much larger C&IM quickly became acute, however, so it picked up two secondhand 4-6-0's and some former New York Central 2-8-0's. C&IM ordered two 2-10-2's and two 4-4-0's from Baldwin, which arrived in 1927. Soon a third 4-4-0, plus some 2-8-2's and 2-10-2's, filled out the roster.

That third 4-4-0, No. 502, shipped by Baldwin in 1928, would be the last American type built for a U.S. railroad. The 4-4-0's handled C&IM's daily passenger train from Springfield to Pekin and back, which made its final run in May 1953, ending their careers, among the last 4-4-0's in U.S. Class 1 service.

In the Depression year of 1931, Lima built few engines, but among them were C&IM 2-8-2 No. 552 and four 2-10-2's, 700-703. Depression or not, the 2-10-2's reeked of prosperity with nickel-plated cylinder and valve heads—C&IM was becoming a first-class operation and wasn't ashamed to show it!

A hidden gem was revealed when C&IM acquired CP&StL: the modest Illinois River harbor at Havana. C&IM



M. L. Powell; J. David Ingles collection

As built, the SD9's had black roofs; month-old 53 and 50 leave Pekin on December 17, 1955.

soon built a coal transfer facility there, from where barges moved coal to Chicago-area Insull power stations. Over the years, the Havana dock was upgraded a few times, and in the modern era it was used for blending Illinois coal with low-sulfur coal from the West.

The 1930s and '40s were truly the Golden Age for C&IM, as it transformed itself into a big-time operation and mimicked many features found on larger railroads. The road solicited from offices in Chicago and New York, and had its own agricultural facility, CIMCO Farm, to help area farmers.

In the postwar era C&IM was widely known for two things: the trademark red stripe on the tenders of its steam power and cabooses (and later the diesels) and a fleet of 70-ton "bathtub" gondolas, the right size for the track structure and the Havana coal dumper. They were a harbinger of modern-day unit-train cars.

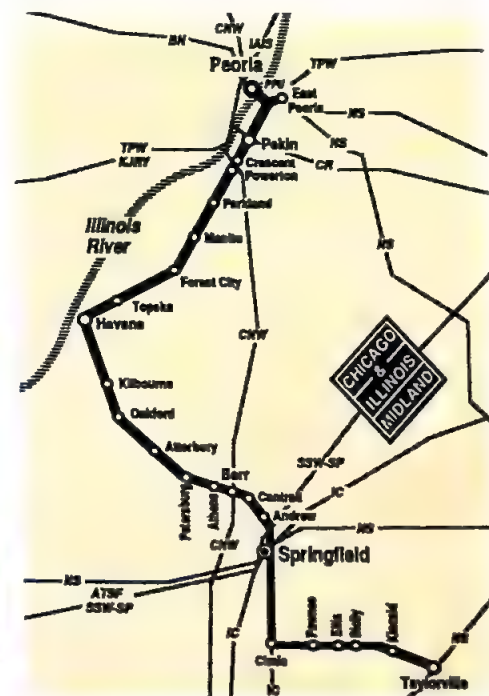
The locomotive fleet was periodically upgraded. C&IM had determined the

2-10-2 type to be best for its coal trains, which had to ascend 2-mile Petersburg Hill north of that town, the line's ruling grade at 1.62 percent. In the 1940s, the Wabash was selling 2-10-2's, so C&IM acquired nine, its Nos. 651-659, built by Brooks in 1917. They were found, however, to almost self-destruct at speeds in excess of 25 mph, and the Midland's engineering department soon determined they were poorly balanced. After modifications at Taylorville shop, the Wabash engines could double their speed. C&IM also bought tenders for them from New York Central, which helped



R. R. Wallin collection

American-type No. 500, first of three built for C&IM in 1927-28, rolls north toward Pekin; the interurban-style cars show the road's Insull heritage. The 4-4-0's made their last runs in 1953.



Can you spot the apparent mislabeling on connecting roads on this 1989 C&IM map?



R. R. Wallin

Unique to C&IM were EMD's only RS1325's, leaving Ellis Yard with a few non-coal cars ahead of the road's signature bathtub coal gondolas. That's the Kincaid Power Station visible at rear.

extend time between service stops.

C&IM's president, Fred L. Schrader, was a diehard steam man who reasoned that since coal was what his road hauled, it was good business to burn it as fuel. By the early '50s, most big roads were dieselizing, so serviceable steam engines could be had for close to scrap price. Thus, C&IM in 1951-52 acquired nine 1920s Baldwin 2-10-2's from Atlantic Coast Line, numbering them 751-759. They replaced the ex-Wabash engines and would be C&IM's last steam road power. Of C&IM's 67 total steam locomotives, 44 were secondhand.

Inevitable changes

As a late steam operator, C&IM began to attract rail photographers from far and wide. The fame would be short-lived, however. Although some C&IM sources said Schrader had his eye on even more 2-10-2's as late as 1954, perhaps B&O "Big Sixes," parent Commonwealth Edison, being a big Chicago utility, was beginning to take heat on its own regarding smoke abatement. With C&IM headquartered in Illinois' state capital, "Com Ed" felt it was time to pull the plug on steam locomotives.

C&IM arranged, through EMD, the

loan of two Milwaukee SD9's and found them satisfactory as road power to replace the 2-10-2's, and so ordered five (Nos. 50-54). With a big Pillsbury mill adjacent to its Springfield yard and other switching needs, C&IM had relied on seven 0-8-0's (two new from Lima in 1937 plus five secondhanders), and so also ordered six SW1200's, with m.u. to allow them to operate in road service.

Dieselization came quickly. SW-1200's 18 and 19 came in April 1955, and the remaining four, Nos. 20-23, plus all five SD9's, in November. Steam purists wondered how 11 diesels could replace 25 steam engines, but many of the latter were out of service. With the diesels, C&IM's shop location changed, too, as a new two-track diesel shop arose in Springfield where the 10-stall ex-CP&StL roundhouse had stood; car-repair work moved there, too. Not coincidentally, steam-enthusiast President Schrader retired in early 1956, succeeded by Com Ed grad James E. Dare.

C&IM was cooking along into the 1960s, hauling coal primarily from the huge Peabody Mine No. 10 near Pawnee. It expanded its all-EMD fleet with two RS1325's in 1960, one SD18 in 1961, and another SD18 in 1962 (Nos. 60 and 61). The RS1325's (30-31) turned out to be the only examples ever built.

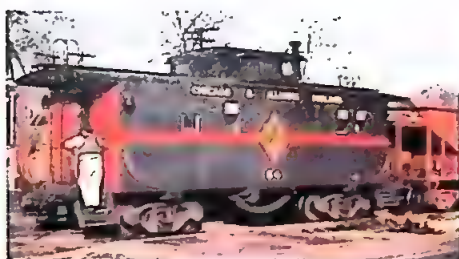
Then a drastic event occurred, as Com Ed built a "mine-mouth" power station near Kincaid, which when finished in 1967 took all the coal from Peabody No. 10 across Highway 104 on an overhead conveyor belt. Thus did C&IM's primary source of coal traffic almost evaporate. A rebound soon occurred, though, with the influx of low-sulfur coal from the West; C&IM received it in Peoria from the Burlington (BN after 1970), hauling it to Havana for barging to Chicago. Later, C&IM built a new connection at Powerton to receive unit coal trains from C&NW.

Ironically, changes in air pollution regulations would be C&IM's salvation. Peabody No. 10 would close and be dismantled, and C&IM would haul low-sulfur western coal right to Kincaid power station, the very plant that had robbed it of its main traffic source. The Midland bought six more new EMD's, SD38-2's 70-75, in 1974, and most of the SW1200's were gradually sold off.



R. R. Wallin collection

Two SD38-2's haul a BN unit coal train into Powerton Yard south of Pekin. C&IM would build a connection for unit trains from C&NW, whose track crossed the overpass in the distance.



R. R. Wallin collection

As did the steam engine tenders, and later the diesels, C&IM's cabooses sported the road's signature red band along their sides.

The ultimate in change began in 1987 when Com Ed decided to sell its railroad. Although Com Ed planned to keep using C&IM to haul coal, changes in the utility industry made such a move prudent. Com Ed was a pioneer in nuclear power generation, and at the time, the long-term future of coal-fired generation was questionable. Despite unions' concerns, the Illinois Commerce Commission approved the sale.

Soon the Kincaid power station was in need of western coal as its only fuel. Initial plans envisioned it arriving on IC or Norfolk Southern and being trucked to the plant, bypassing C&IM, but, ever resourceful, the road modified the conveyor belt from defunct Mine No. 10 so it could unload coal from trains arriving at its adjacent Ellis Yard.

The final changes came in the mid-1990s. The SD38's, which at times had been leased to BN, were in need of major repairs and so in 1995 were sold to Union Pacific, which made them hump-yard power. Replacements arrived in January 1996: five ex-Southern SD24's rebuilt by VMV Corp. at its shop in Paducah, Ky., into "SD20's." Originally high-nosed, these 1959 units (C&IM 80-84) were rebuilt with non-turbocharged prime movers and low noses. Happily for train-watchers, they came painted in C&IM green with the old red stripe revived.

The euphoria over the new units was short-lived, though, for on February 9, 1996, it was announced that C&IM had been bought by Genesee & Wyoming Corp. (GWI), the burgeoning shortline holding company based in western New York. With the deal came a name change to Illinois & Midland Railroad.

Today's I&M bears scant resem-



M. L. Powell; J. David Ingles collection

As-built, the first C&IM SW1200's lacked the white pinstripes along the red band. No. 18, built in April '55, is at Pekin on November 22.

blance to C&IM, although the RS1325's and SD18's, now in GWI orange and black, have not moved, running in local service between Springfield and East Peoria. Big Union Pacific road units run through, taking Powder River Basin coal to Kincaid power station. Four of the SD20's have gone to other GWI properties, while No. 81 usually works in Peoria transfer service. GWI in 2004 leased the former Peoria & Pekin Union and renamed it Tazewell & Peoria (TZPR), for the two counties it serves; TZPR and I&M share the same management. GWI also closed the diesel shop in Springfield, shifting all repair and maintenance on I&M and TZPR engines to the latter's former P&PU shop in East Peoria. ■

C&IM FACT FILE

Comparative figures are for 1930 and 1995

Route-miles: 135; 118

Locomotives: 24; 18

Freight cars: 1,559; 421

Passenger cars: 14; 0

Headquarters city: Springfield, Ill.

Special interest group: Chicago & Illinois

Midland Chapter, National Railway

Historical Society, 100 N. State Street,

Chatham, IL 62629; (217) 483-7792

Recommended reading: *Chicago & Illinois*

Midland, by Richard R. Wallin, Paul H.

Stringham, and John Szwajkark (Golden

West Books, 1979); *Chicago & Illinois*

Midland Railway in Color, by Ryan Crawford

and James E. Lewnard (Morning Sun

Books, 2009).

Sources: *Train-Watcher's Guide to North*

American Railroads (Kalmbach, 1992).

Official Railway Equipment Register,

Moody's Transportation Manual.

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Great Photographers

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For more than a half-century, Bill Middleton has been an "author's author." Lucky for us, he also took photographs

By Kevin P. Keefe
Photos by William D. Middleton





A North Shore Line *Electroliner* streaks through the south side of Milwaukee en route to Chicago in October 1957. Middleton, second to none as an authority on electric railways, calls the North Shore's two articulated trains "the finest interurban equipment ever constructed in the United States."



Even if he'd never picked up a camera, William D. Middleton would be a shoo-in for a railroad publishing hall of fame. As a journalist and a historian, he's done it all: 23 books, many of them definitive, especially in the field of electric traction; 85-plus bylines in *TRAINS*, topping all of the magazine's feature writers; a long association with *Railway Age*; helping lead Indiana University Press's editorial team for its landmark *Encyclopedia of North American Railroads*.

Middleton is such an author's author that it's hard to imagine how anyone in railroading over the past 50 years could have avoided reading at least something with his byline.

But Bill Middleton carried a camera, too, and he knew how to use it. In fact, his photo credit line has run next to literally thousands of published images. As examples of first-rate photojournalism—Bill does not consider himself an art photographer—his photographs nevertheless compare favorably with those of a host of other masters who were his contemporaries, and

touchstones. In conversation with Bill, the name of Phil Hastings comes up most often, not surprising given both men's connections to longtime *TRAINS* Editor David P. Morgan. But Bill was influenced by many others: J. Parker Lamb, Don Wood, Jim Shaughnessy, Stan Kistler. Most of them became his friends and, in a couple of cases, his trusted collaborators.

Middleton's photos stand out for any number of reasons: his mastery of basic technique, his eye for the unusual, certainly his classical composition. Most of all, though, his pictures almost always tell a complete story. With a camera in his hand, Bill thinks like a journalist, seeking the dominant subject, the contextual detail, the surrounding geography. Because he set out at an early stage to be a writer who could illustrate his own articles and books, his pictures are an essential part of the visual record of a variety of subjects: Chicago's Insull interurbans, the Chicago & North Western of the upper Midwest, the Pennsylvania Railroad's GG1, and the last days of steam on the Duluth, Missabe & Iron Range.

During his time at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Middleton explored the Albany-Troy-Schenectady area of New York state. He caught Delaware & Hudson 4-6-6-4 No. 1510 drifting downgrade with an eastbound from a perch on NYC's West Shore bridge in South Schenectady on May 14, 1950.

Quite a wide-ranging output for a man identified so strongly with the singular subject of traction.

Montana, New York, Wisconsin

Bill's first railroad photographs were about as far from America's traction capitals as you could get: Wolf Point, Mont., on the Great Northern main line. The year was 1938, and Bill was all of 10 years old. Bill's father, William, was a physician working for the National Indian Service, and had certainly detected his son's budding interest in railroads. (Bill already had railroad credentials: his grandfather, William Middleton, was born in Scotland, served in the Civil War, and was the first chief physician for the Rock Island.) Thus did young Bill hike a mile west of town and point his Kodak

Brown, and that the eastern end of GNE was just over the Wolf Creek, Wis., border to nearby Missouri River. The fact that the future civil engineer was photographing a bridge, he assures us, was just coincidence. "The truth is," says Bill, "I was just taking a train picture."

Bill's civil engineering trajectory included college at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, from which he graduated in 1950, then graduate school at the University of Wisconsin. Both institutions figured in his railroad photography: at Rensselaer he became friends with Jim Shaughnessy, a teenager whose family lived near the RPI campus and who became a major influence on Bill and a generation of other photographers ["The Trains of Troy," Summer 2005 CLASSIC TRAINS]. "Jim was like the mascot of our little train group," recalls Middleton. "It was great when I saw his photos later. When you see one of his photos, you know *that's* a Jim Shaughnessy photo." Later, at grad school in Madison, Wis., Bill continued shooting trains, creating a valuable archive of Milwaukee Road and C&NW steam and diesel photos in an often overlooked corner of both systems.

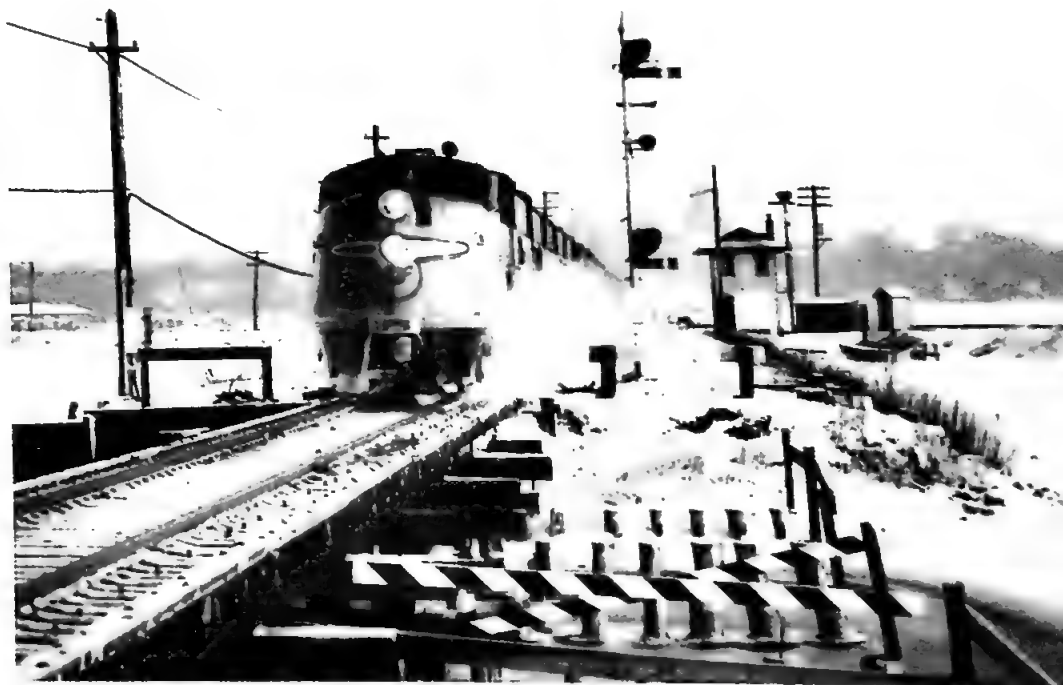
Then it was off to the U.S. Navy. In the 30-year active-duty career that ensued, Bill managed to live in some of the most exotic places imaginable. Scenic Point Mugu, Calif., was one of the more run-of-the-mill, compared with Japan, Korea, Turkey, and Morocco. Although these assignments meant he was missing a lot of the steam-to-diesel transition era in the States, he managed to take memorable train pictures anyway. Bill recalls: "In Morocco in 1951, all the main lines were already dieselized, but they had some steam switchers, all Baldwin. Turkey, luckily enough, was all steam." He also was on hand in Japan in the early 1960s for the arrival of the Shinkansen "bullet trains," on which he reported extensively for TRAINS. Bill retired from the Navy in 1979 and moved on to the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, where he was the chief facilities officer. He retired in 1993.

Double threat

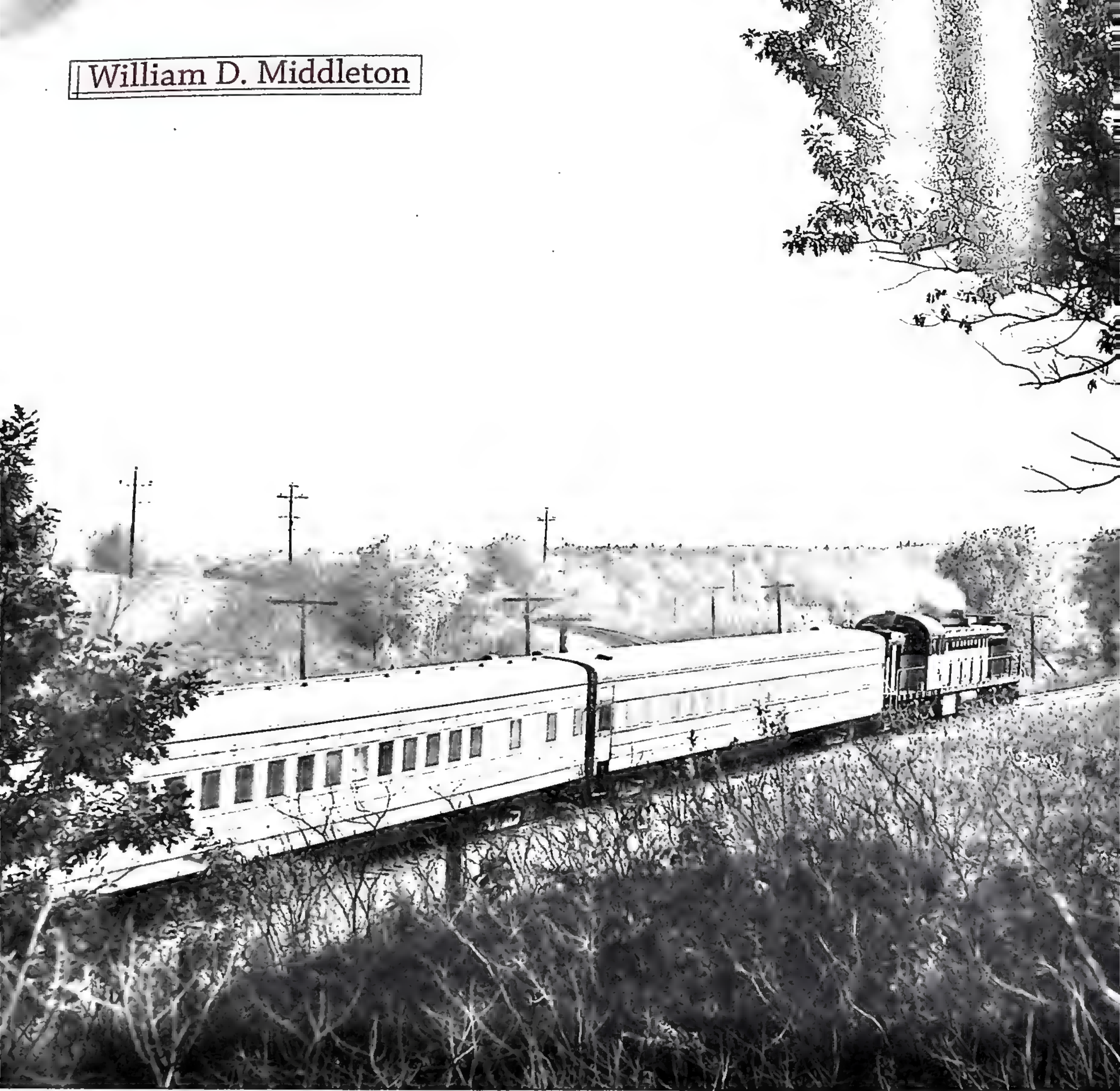
Throughout this life, Middleton has nearly always had a camera by his side. Whether he was stalking Illinois Central meat trains, recording the last years of traction properties like the Fort Dodge, Des Moines & Southern, or shooting Northern Pacific passenger trains, he was methodical in his approach and catholic in his tastes. For all his association with traction, you



Graduate studies at the University of Wisconsin took Middleton to Madison, where the conductor and engine crew of Chicago & North Western's Chicago-Minneapolis *Viking* confer before departure. It's May 1955, and steam power like Pacific 2905 will soon be off this run.



On a frigid December 30, 1948, two C&NW E units leave Madison with a Chicago-bound mail-and-express train. The train is crossing the Milwaukee Road diamond at MX Tower, located at the intersection of two causeways across Lake Monona; the state capitol rises beyond.



Southbound Milwaukee Road train 202 rolls out of Wausau, Wis., at the start of its 2½-hour run down the Wisconsin River valley to the main line at New Lisbon, where it will connect with No. 2, the Minneapolis–Chicago *Afternoon Hiawatha*. Behind RSC2 992 on this October 6, 1957, are three 1942 coaches bumped from mainline *Hiawatha* service.

cannot confine Bill Middleton to any particular genre of railroading. All of it interested him. "I tried to do a count several years ago, going over my 50,000 to 60,000 negatives," Bill explains. "I discovered that maybe 60 to 65 percent of what I took was *not* traction."

And unlike so many other photographers of his generation, he did not get hung up over the demise of steam. Bill could shoot steam with the best of them, but losing it didn't kill his enthusiasm. "The steam-diesel transition

was discouraging, but I tried to stay interested in railroading in general," he says. "I felt sorry for the guy who was always bemoaning the loss of steam."

Part of Bill's motivation to take pictures certainly was to get published. Bill's impressive lineup of books and articles is part and parcel of his interest in photography. Early on he figured out he was a double threat: a writer who could, for the most part, illustrate his work with his own photography. It was never photography for photogra-



phy's sake, nor a need to make an artistic statement. "It was a way to make a record of things," he says now. "If you're going to write, you'll need illustration, so why not take the pictures?" He also can't help poking a bit of fun at two of his mentors, collaborators Morgan and Hastings, who worked together extensively in the mid-1950s tracking down the last of steam for three series in *TRAINS*: "They had to send two guys to do what I could do alone." The editor himself acknowledged it in the



May 1965 issue when, referring to Bill, he wrote, "very few men are masters of both camera *and* typewriter."

Although Morgan was not the editor when Bill first broke into *TRAINS*—two photos, of C&NW and Milwaukee passenger trains at Madison, were published by Editor Willard V. Anderson in November 1949—Bill certainly had a close relationship with the man who went on to publish his byline so many times. "David was the greatest editor I ever worked with. For one thing, he did not rewrite things to suit himself. If he wanted you to change something, or if he thought you missed something important, he'd simply return the manuscript and have you do it yourself. And virtually every time I had to say to myself, 'By God, he's right!'"

And Morgan was pleased to feature Middleton the photographer. Bill's photos made it onto the cover of *TRAINS* 20 times during D.P.M.'s 33-year tenure, and 21 times overall. His most recent was April 2001, a night photo of a DM&IR 2-8-8-4 Yellowstone photographed in May 1959.

Cameras and collaboration

Middleton's equipment reflected the changes in photography from the late 1940s into the '70s and beyond. The names and models are right out of the archives of American photography. His

In another Wisconsin fall scene, a C&NW E8 leads the Chicago–Rapid City, S.Dak., *Dakota 400* past the shimmering waters of Devil's Lake on October 7, 1956. Today, Wisconsin & Southern freights pass through this scenic state park, located 3 miles south of Baraboo.

first regular camera, around 1946, was a fixed-focus 35mm Argus, which Bill describes as "godawful." Later, his father gave him a Kodak Autographic from the 1920s, which Bill said produced some great photos until the bellows failed. He also used a Mamiya 645 for many years. "I didn't like having to look down into the viewfinder, but I got used to it." Other oddities from his camera bag have included a Voigtlander Bessa, a folding 120 camera; a small Speed Graphic; and an East German contraption called a Praktasix.

Middleton credits Hastings with turning him on to one of his favorite cameras: a Rolleiflex 2¼-format twin-lens reflex. "Phil was using it successfully, so I got one for myself. The square format was sometimes a disadvantage, but it turned out to be one of the best things I ever did." Bill kept the Rollei for 10 or 15 years until, while he was living in Hawaii, his son dropped it in a river. He eventually converted to a 35mm Nikon and stuck to that redoubtable brand for the rest of his career. "I wanted to travel lighter, and my shoul-



Fort Dodge, Des Moines & Southern freight extra 362 south meets northbound car 72, running as Boone-Fort Dodge train 1, at Hope, Iowa. The freight, powered by an ex-Oregon Electric motor, has backed onto the Rockwell City branch to clear the passenger train in this April 1955 interurban vignette.

A grade-separated private right of way provided Milwaukee Electric Lines with a high-speed path to downtown Milwaukee from the west. In September 1948, car 1119 dashes east at 35th Street beneath a wire-support tower that still stands, visible to motorists battling traffic on Interstate 94.





Middleton's vantage point for this 1956 photo, an Illinois Central M.U. suburban train in Chicago, is about to be overtaken by a South Shore Line M.U. train. Both are headed for IC's Randolph Street Station, 2 miles ahead.



In a delightful snapshot of North Dakota prairie railroading, Northern Pacific conductor C. L. Manro stands by while mail is unloaded from the Railway Post Office area of motor car B-21 at Sheldon. The "doodlebug," built in 1929 by Electro-Motive Corp., is working as Fargo-Streeter train 139, one of a handful of NP runs held down by traditional motor cars into the early 1960s. NP had 31 motor cars at one time or another, including 23 EMC cars and 3 RDC's.

der was bothering me," he explains. "The Nikon was portable and durable, although I wasn't into using that many different lenses."

Although Bill shot color slides through his career, he concentrated on black and white, using Kodak Professional Plus X film more than anything else. "It's not real fast, but I liked the contrast," he says. "I liked black and white because, for me, color somehow doesn't have that personal touch."

Bill is a born collaborator, whether working in engineering, teaming up with editors, leading large publishing projects, or even taking his own pictures. In the case of the last, it's a key personal asset, because for most of his photography career, Bill relied on others to print his pictures. Two people, to be specific: Fred W. Schneider III and Stan Kistler. Schneider, of Lancaster, Pa., is a prominent photographer and historian in traction circles. Kistler is one of the deans of California railroad photographers. Both are among Bill's oldest and closest friends. Bill credits both with doing "zillions of my prints."

Bill began farming out his printing

early in his career, and he's pretty frank about why. "I absolutely hated darkroom work, so this worked so well for me. Fred and Stan love to work in the darkroom, and these guys would get the print exactly the way I would." Of course, Bill paid both for all their work.

Schneider is candid in his assessment of Bill's photography. "Bill understands two things that make a good picture. He has a feel for photo composition. He also understands that you show your good and hide the bad. We all have good and bad. Sometimes what you thought was good when you leaned on the shutter doesn't always make the test later. He knew what to tell me to print afterwards . . . if I hadn't already decided to print it."

Kistler began doing prints for Bill in the late 1970s, and in many ways it was an education for the printmaker. "It was always a delight to get five or six rolls of Plus-X 120 from Bill," says Kistler. "His night images were sometimes a challenge, but I was always able to meet his high standards. He also excelled in 'available light' views of station interiors and such. Some-

times Bill would send me some of his older negatives from his Navy years overseas, so I got to see the railroads of the world through Bill's camera."

Composing for publication

Outsourcing the printing gave Bill the opportunity to concentrate on that strength identified by Schneider: an undeniable flair for composition. Middleton is modest about this talent—"I mostly put it down to instinct"—but his decades of publishing success is a measure of just how creative and effective he could be once he held up the viewfinder. Given the context of the photographer and the story he is always trying to tell, it's hard to imagine how any of them could be improved. In fact, the need to be effective, to get across an idea to a viewer, helped drive him. "When I picked up the camera, I was always thinking of how I wanted the image to look on paper."

And how *great* they looked on paper. Bill has been so active and ubiquitous that his photos are indispensable to telling the story of North American railroading in the 1950s and three or



four decades to follow. There were the traction photos, of course, but also subjects as disparate as CN's massive locomotive shops in Winnipeg, or Soo Line freight trains in Wisconsin, or steam and diesel in Turkey and Thailand. One way to understand how wide-ranging he has been is to simply ask him about some of his favorites. Among them:

- Devil's Lake, Wisconsin, October 7, 1956, a shot from a bluff overlooking the streaking *Dakota 400* [page 27]. "I

might have gotten my best photo there. I climbed clear to the top. It was such a great workout." At the bottom of the hill was another special spot, where Bill and his wife, Dorothy, and friends would picnic as North Western trains rolled past.

- Night photos on the DM&IR at Proctor, Minn., in May 1959. "This was the last of major steam up there, and I was living in Minneapolis at the time. I had a Monday free, so I made arrangements with the railroad, took a

quick 24-hour trip, and went to Proctor to find a 200-car train waiting for me. Everything you'd want to have happen, happened. The pictures stand out by themselves."

- North Shore Line, at any number of locations between Chicago and Milwaukee, in the closing years of America's fastest interurban. The railroad meshed with his appreciation of good engineering. "What struck me about that railroad was how well they installed the track. They put a lot of time



Middleton counts a May 26, 1959, ride on Missabe 2-8-8-4 228 among his most memorable experiences. He took this rail-level view at Proctor, Minn., before climbing up for a run north with 200 empty ore cars; more impressive was the return with 190 loads.

Soo Line F units idle at Milwaukee Road's Minneapolis station (where Soo was a tenant) with the *Soo-Dominion* in August 1958. Soo handled the train St. Paul-Portal, N.Dak.; CP took it on to Moose Jaw, Sask., and a connection with the *Dominion* to Vancouver.



In a dramatic October 1958 view at Minneapolis & St. Louis' Cedar Lake Yard, Minneapolis, an F3 and GP9 (and, unseen, two other F's) prepare to depart with time freight 20 to Peoria. Beyond are two RS1 yard engines and, blurred in this time exposure, a passing C&NW freight.





This scene of diesels inside Canadian National's Transcona Shops in Winnipeg, Man., graced the cover of the October 1960 issue of *TRAINS* magazine. Inside was a study of the railroads of Winnipeg, one of Middleton's 85-plus *TRAINS* articles, most illustrated with his own photos.



Another major *TRAINS* feature by Middleton was "Meat Train" [October '58], in which he examined the movement of a high-priority commodity over Illinois Central's Iowa Division. A stalled train ahead halted the GP7's and reefers of hotshot CC-6 in western Illinois, enabling Middleton to get this picture.

In a photo that emphasizes the heavy infrastructure of mainline electrification, Penn Central GG1 4915 breezes over a small rise just north of Bowie, Md., with New York-Washington train 135 on February 12, 1971.



into the physical plant." The same could be said for another favorite Middleton location: the "ideal section" of the South Shore, east of Gary, Ind.

Life beyond railroading

Apart from his career, Bill also has had a rich personal life. His wife of 53 years, Dorothy, died in 2009 at age 80, and had a substantial career of her own as an educator, writer, and museum docent. Together they raised two sons, Nick, in Seattle, and Bill, in Livonia, N.Y. Bill Sr. divides his time between his sons. He also has two grandchildren. The two Bills celebrated a landmark of their own in fall 2009, when Indiana University Press published their biography of traction pioneer Frank Sprague, *Frank Julian Sprague: Electrical Inventor & Engineer*, to strong reviews.

Meanwhile, Bill hasn't escaped the pull of photography. In 2000, Indiana University published his most personal book, *Yet There Isn't a Train I Wouldn't*

Take, a memoir of his many railroad journeys, lavishly illustrated with his photos. In 2006, the Railway & Locomotive Historical Society recognized Bill's work with its Fred A. and Jane R. Stindt Photography Award. Although health concerns have slowed him down somewhat, Bill says he has recently been making the transition to a digital camera and, like everything else in his life, he is determined to master it. Anyone who loves great railroad photographs can eagerly await the results. ■

www.ClassicTrainsMag.com CLASSIC TRAINS 33

Burlington's NIGHT CRAWLER

Glimpses back in time, and of some of the lesser-known scenic sights of Wyoming



By Stan Rhine • Photos by the author

Off the speedy paths of its *Zephyr* headliners, the Burlington Route, as late as the decade preceding Amtrak, operated a plethora of local passenger trains. Once the lifeblood of hundreds of communities in the pre-highway age, many of these little trains held on because of mail contracts. One such pair was Nos. 29 and 30, which linked Denver and Billings, Mont.; south of Wendover, Wyo., they ran on Chicago, Burlington & Quincy subsidiary Colorado & Southern.

Too slow to be *Zephyrs*, and lacking streamlined equipment to boot, these trains (and their many counterparts) did not rate official names. To railroaders and railfans alike, though, trains 29

and 30 were "the Night Crawler," and they lived up to that tag. Although the trains did kick up their heels on fast track, they took 19½ hours to cover the 668 miles between Denver and Billings, an average of 34.2 mph. A single shiny E unit generally drew the Night Crawler, which in my time had a few mail storage and express cars, a Railway Post Office-baggage car, and a heavy-weight coach; sleepers had come off in 1964 [see "Second Section"].

Let's board No. 29 for a ride north in the mid-1960s.

As the sun slips behind the Front Range of the Colorado Rockies, washing the clouds with gold, down at the Post Office Terminal Annex next to Denver Union Station, mail is being loaded onto the Night Crawler. At 8:30

the conductor waves the highball and No. 29 undulates through the maze of depot tracks, bound for the foothills farming communities of Broomfield, Longmont, Berthoud, Loveland, and Fort Collins, Colo. As the train scamper along, clerks in the RPO apartment sort mail into the myriad pigeonholes and sacks hung from racks. Boulder, the second stop 28 miles and 44 minutes out, is not a farming town but a university city, and the lead car is set out at the modern depot. Stripped of mail for the area during the night and reloaded with mail for Denver and points south, the car will be whisked away by southbound counterpart No. 30 around sunrise.

Wyoming's 6,062-foot-high state capital, Cheyenne, is reached a little after



Nearing dusk on July 30, 1967, "Night Crawler" No. 30 rolls past Boysen Reservoir just north of Bonneville, Wyo., against the backdrop of the Bridger Mountains. The train is in the sunset of its career, its last run occurring seven months after the author rode No. 29 in February (right).

midnight. Passengers not jolted awake by the stop, the setting out of another mail car, and the recoupling of the engine are sprawled across their seats in a tranquil tussle with Morpheus. Founded with the arrival of the Union Pacific in November 1867, Cheyenne quickly moved out of its tents, becoming a staid, respectable (for Wyoming)—if perpetually blustery—place. The quiet of the city at this early hour belies the slack-reined times that invariably attend the city's annual July rodeo blowout, Frontier Days. Despite its veneer of 1960s urbanization, Cheyenne, it was said, could be pretty wild even

without Frontier Days. By the time of 29's arrival, though, most folks were sawing logs.

Its station work completed, the Night Crawler eases out of town at 12:49 a.m. This part of the trip, along the edge of the Laramie Mountains through Horse Creek, Chugwater, Wheatland, Wendover (where, northbound, C&S turns the train over to parent CB&Q), and Douglas, is in the dead of night—in both directions. In its final years, No. 29 was scheduled to meet counterpart 30 at Chugwater at 2:23 a.m., an event likely missed by the handful of sleeping passengers in the coach.

Route		ISSUED BY (157) THE COLORADO AND SOUTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY	
Date of Expiration <u>FEB 1968</u>		FORM <u>FP-7</u> <u>38197</u>	
PASSENGER COUPON NOT GOOD FOR PASSAGE		RT ☐	OW ☒
FROM <u>FILLMORE</u>		VIA RAILROAD	
TO <u>WENDOVER</u>		<u>C&S</u>	
TO <u>BILLINGS</u>		<u>CB&Q</u>	
TO			
DESTINATION <u>BILLINGS</u>		FAMILY TICKET	
GOOD FROM ORIGINATING POINT ONLY ON MONDAY, TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY OR THURSDAY.			
GOOD FOR	ADULTS	CHILDREN 12 TO 21, INCL.	CHILDREN 5 TO 11, INCL.
☒	2		2
SELLING AGENT STAMP HERE		Regular Adult Fare \$ <u>17.10</u>	
		Other Adult Fare \$ <u>0.00</u>	
		Child(ren) 12 to 21, incl. \$	
		Child(ren) 5 to 11, incl. \$	
		Total \$	
		Tax \$	
		Total Including Tax \$ <u>21.40</u>	
Non-Transferable Sold Subject to Tariff Regulations		Mark Maglin General Passenger Agent	
BAGGAGE ☐			

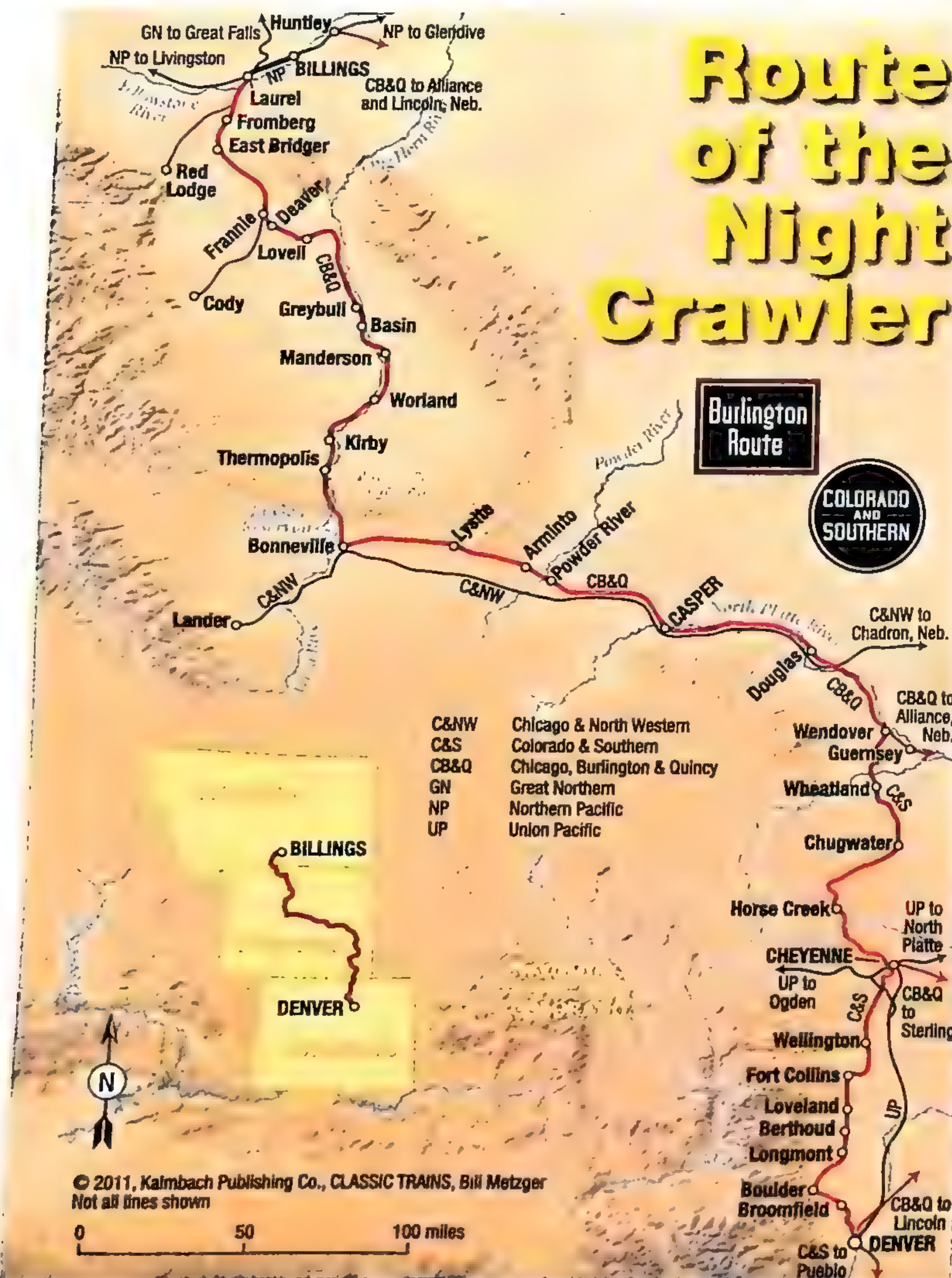


Led by CB&Q E8 9947B, C&S No. 30 rolls into Boulder, Colo., elevation 5,244 feet, in the early morning of August 20, 1965. The train will pick up a mail storage car here and arrive in Denver about 7:30.



It's 6:30 on a July '66 morning in Casper, largest city between Denver and Billings. Passengers are off No. 29 for breakfast as Q E8 9938B is fueled and mail is exchanged; at right, a freight waits to follow.

Route of the Night Crawler



Breakfast in Casper

Around sunrise, No. 29 arrives at the 5,123-foot-high North Platte River city of Casper, in 1960 with 35,000 people the largest in the state. Last night's supper in Denver, 339 miles south, has been pretty well tamped down by the gentle motions of the coach during the last 10 hours. For the coach-only accommodation, Casper was the first of two meal stops. At 6:20 a.m., as passengers step onto the platform to greet the new day, the locomotive is uncoupled and moved away to be refueled. This allows the Casper switcher to pull off another mail car or two. With servicing underway, the handful of passengers follow the crew across the street to breakfast.

The restaurant is a convivial meeting place for oilmen, ranchers, farmers, railroaders, and others up at sunrise. It is a high-ceilinged, black-and-white-tile-floored, echoey place where the clash and clatter of heavy, bulletproof china being washed and stacked often make conversation difficult if not impossible. For passengers, the partaking of endless cups of strong coffee and plate-sized pancakes, a railroad meal in a tradition reaching back past Fred Harvey, leaves just enough time to finish eating and drift back across the street to the train.

Departure is at 7 a.m., 40 minutes after arrival, with a fresh crew on board. Now with fewer cars and few stops to make, this leg is relatively fast, at more than 40 mph. About midway between Hell's Half Acre and Butch Cassidy's Hole-in-the-Wall, the train calls at Armito (not far from Deadman's Butte) and parched Lysite on its way to Bonneville.

Casper is at the apex of a big bend in the North Platte River, which flows



north out of Colorado. A hundred years before, three pioneer trails—the Oregon, California, and Mormon—followed the North Platte across the treeless plains of what became Nebraska, into the future Wyoming, down to the Sweetwater River, and west over the Continental Divide. The Union Pacific, building west from Omaha, diverged from these well-established trails to take a more challenging but direct route west of Cheyenne—Sherman Hill.

Burlington's tracks never ventured west of the Continental Divide. About 60 miles southwest of Bonneville, however, lies South Pass, the famous rediscovery of explorer Jedediah Smith, where the three pioneer trails crested the spine of the continent to reach the Pacific watershed. The first wagon train crossed South Pass in 1843, only 19 years after Smith's first crossing. Nineteen years later, in 1862, President Lincoln signed the Pacific Railroad charter, and by that time, the trickle of migrants had become a torrent. By 1881 (another 19 years later), the West was webbed with rails, and migrants were flooding in by train. In the span of one human lifetime, then, the West had been transformed from terra incognita to a land we would all recognize.

Despite South Pass's importance as a part of the 19th century overland trails, steel rails did not grace the crossing

until the mid-20th century when U.S. Steel opened an iron-ore mine near South Pass City, using a fleet of second-hand F7's to haul ore down to a UP connection. The closest other tracks were those of Chicago & North Western, which stopped its westward march at Lander, 40 miles to the north. The UP made its Continental Divide crossing 60 miles to the southeast, near Wamsutter, just west of Rawlins.

Wind River Canyon

Turning north again at Bonneville, No. 29 rolls along the sunny shores of Boysen Reservoir, framed by the Owl Creek Mountains to the west and the Bridgers to the east. At Boysen Dam, the train dives through a tunnel, crosses a long steel trestle, and pops through a couple of short, black basaltic tunnels into the narrows of Wind River Canyon, the scenic highlight of the journey. The coach's Dutch door offers a spectacular view of the ever-widening canyon, as the E unit hums along the slight downgrade. Signs along U.S. 20 on the canyon's east side explain the geology, tipped on edge and carved into relief by the rushing river, exposing a sequence leading to the basement rocks of the earth. (Once out of the canyon, the waterway's name changes from Wind River to Big Horn River, having been named by two separate explorers who

weren't aware it was a single river.)

Train 29 rolls down Wind River Canyon, the scenic highlight among several vistas on the route, heading for Thermopolis in July 1966. Across the river at right is U.S. highway 20.

The next stop is at the south edge of the Big Horn Basin in Thermopolis, the world's largest mineral hot springs. With swimming pools, therapy pools, mud baths, water slides, and other naturally heated aquatic diversions, 4,326-foot-high Thermopolis has acres of fantastic cones and bubbling, mineralized water rippling across rock wildly painted by nature's slow, persistent brush.

Most of the West, of course, is ranch country. In the rain shadow of the Sierra and the Cascades, only lofty mountains get much precipitation. The rest of the region survives on what folks back East could get in a couple of good rainstorms. One of the Night Crawler's stops, Lysite, makes do with less than 6 inches of precipitation a year, and in 1960, squeezed out only 1.28 inches. Farming was thus restricted to bottomlands that could easily be irrigated.

Outside the coach window, the sunny uplands of the Wyoming Basin trot by, revealing roads, barbed-wire fences, and occasional houses, but most of the land seems little changed from what it must have looked like hundreds of years ago. Today it still looks much that



After its scheduled lunch stop, No. 29 prepares to leave Worland at 11:20 a.m. in July 1966. Once into Billings, Northern Pacific will service E8 9938B during its almost-22-hour layover.

way. Maintaining a respectful distance from the high reaches of Wyoming's Middle Rockies, the route rises and dips some, starting in Denver at an elevation of 5,280 feet and ending at 3,124 feet in Billings (in 1960, Montana's largest city with 53,000 population).

A relaxed pace

Despite the crew's blue serge uniforms, which lent an air of formality, the Night Crawler was a casual operation. Much of its trip was after dark. Southbound, it traversed most of Wyoming at night, while northbound, daylight came about one-third of the way through. Some passengers dozed. Others alighted briefly at the stops to watch mail and express being passed into and out of the RPO-baggage car, or stayed on board, strolling back and forth in the coach aisle. A book provided a wel-

come diversion, but the lure of the ever-changing scenic panorama constantly dragged one's eyes back up off the page and out the window.

For a better view, a passenger could step out onto the coach's back platform, empty except for swirling clouds of dust. A flimsy, waist-high accordion tailgate reminded the unwary not to step farther. The platform offered a great vantage point for spotting startled antelope bounding away from the train across the grassy steppes. And the mesmerizing backward rush of rail and crossties xylophoning out from beneath the coach, accompanied by the soothing clickety-clack of the staggered rail joints, were wonderful antidotes for whatever ailed one.

The customarily assigned six-axle coach had been "modernized" with rubber-gasketed windows and painted sil-

ver to blend with the Q's streamlined passenger stock. That attempt at uniformity, however, fell a bit short out here at the end of Burlington's tether, for the RPO and most of the mail cars between the train's silver extremities were still adorned in the dark green of the heavy-weight era.

The 80-foot coach held about 60 passengers, more than the population at some of the Night Crawler's many stops, and far more than ever rode the train when I experienced it in the 1960s. The crew and passengers might fill 10 percent of the space. The interior was neatly painted, well lit, and pleasant, in a soothingly old-fashioned way. High-backed, comfortable reclining seats were spaced to permit fully stretching out one's legs. Commodious aisles beckoned the stroller. And that rear platform offered an unparalleled view of the scenery. Steam-heated in winter and air-conditioned in summer, the roomy car contrasted pleasantly with the hard, claustrophobic, sardine-can seating of an airliner.

Despite the languid pace, though, on board there was work to be done. As the mail clerk was handing off mail to, say, the postmaster at tiny Frannie, Wyo., last stop before Montana, and receiving Frannie's outgoing mail, the brakeman had pulled a pair of coveralls over his uniform and was busy loading and setting off milk cans, truck tires, a galvanized stock tank, a snazzy fat-tired bicycle for junior from the mail-order folks at Montgomery Ward or rival Sears, Roebuck, or a well-wrapped package from Miller Stockman in Denver. The trek of the Night Crawler took it across much territory that was, and



Snow covers Boysen Ridge just north of the Wind River Indian Reservation on December 21, 1965, as No. 29 nears Thermopolis. Heavy Christmas mail has called for a pair of SD9's as power instead of the usual single E8; the train has already set out several mail cars.

remains today, lightly inhabited. It is moot whether these far-flung communities now are being served more expeditiously, and more devotedly, by truck than they were by train.

Indeed, as the mail-heavy Christmas season approached, the train would swell beyond the ability of a lone E unit. To accommodate the extra business, the Burlington would order up a pair of steam-generator-equipped SD9's, the region's ubiquitous first-generation diesel freight power. (By 1957, CB&Q and C&S/Fort Worth & Denver had a total of 149 SD7's and 9's, three-quarters of them built with steam boilers.) The black-and-gray hood units were certainly a step down from the shiny silver E, but spoke eloquently to a railroad's flexibility in meeting demand. More mail? More passengers? Simple. Just add another car. Can the airlines do that?

Lunchtime at Worland

Leaving Thermopolis, the Night Crawler continues along the Big Horn River, arriving at 4,061-foot-high Worland just before 11 a.m. for a 40-minute stop. Worland is one of Wyoming's hot spots. Literally. It's not the hottest—Basin, two stops north, once recorded 114 degrees—but the sun beats down on the crew and passengers as we troop from the depot across the sweltering street to one of two restaurants.

Pushing the creaky screen door



With its last sack of railborne mail for the 1,220 residents of Basin, Wyo., loaded into the postmaster's car, No. 29 is ready to leave town on this, its last run, on September 2, 1967.



Hardly any among the 600 citizens of Bridger, Mont., have come down to the shelter at East Bridger to bid farewell to the last Night Crawler, though an old-timer has just disembarked.

open, we mosey in. The door is zinged smartly shut behind us by a long coil spring. The occasional hungry fly, tempted in by the sizzle of meat, is soon immobilized on the omnipresent amber strip of flypaper hung by the cash register. Sitting at tables covered with red-and-white checked tablecloths, tinkling glasses of icewater and partly handwritten menus before us, we contemplate the limited selections. It generally came down to a choice between a hamburger and fries or a BLT sandwich and chips . . . not necessarily at the same restaurant.

Visible through a curtain-framed front window, across the street and behind the brick depot, is the deserted train. With their train reduced at Casper to the lanky diesel and the three cars, by now the crew outnumbers the passengers. Departure from Worland is at 11:20, and the train passes huge, bright-yellow piles of sulfur on its way to Manderson and Basin.

Emerging from short but scenic Sheep Canyon, the train pulls into

Greybull to top off its fuel and water tanks, departing at 12:15 p.m. From Greybull, and Lovell, 34 miles on, highways lead directly west to Cody, but up the line at Deaver—once the Night Crawlers' afternoon meeting point—there is a bus connection to Cody, near the east entrance of Yellowstone Park. Until the 1950s, when all rail passenger service to Yellowstone was discontinued, CB&Q provided the only service to the park's east entrance, via the Cody branch, which still sees BNSF Railway freights today.

Three railroads served the park from Montana points: Union Pacific at West Yellowstone; Milwaukee Road at Three Forks; and Northern Pacific at Gardiner, the park's northern gateway, via a 32-mile branch from its main line at Livingston. NP passengers disembarked at Gardiner's low, log depot, and stage coaches took them into Mammoth and throughout the park. After satiating themselves with the magnificent wildness of Yellowstone scenery, they would leave with a lifetime of memories.



On 29's last run on September 2, 1967, a railroad employee photographs the crew at Casper. The E8, 9938B, is being serviced, and a switcher will couple on to remove a mail storage car.

End of the line

Along the way north, lots of friendly folks waiting in their pickups by wooden crossbucks wave as the Night Crawler flashes by. There are also station agents, mailmen, and townspeople down to meet the train at each of the 28 scheduled stops—an average of one every 23 miles in this sparsely inhabited land. There are a few other “conditional” stops, and the crew might just take a fancy to stop elsewhere. It is, indeed, a “crawler.”

After 90 miles or so, the train veers away from the Big Horn River, stopping at Lovell. It is then a mere 18 miles to the white-painted clapboard depot at Frannie, then a hop, skip, and a couple more stops—including a meet with

southbound No. 30 at Fromberg, Mont.—to Laurel. There, finally, the Night Crawler is turned loose.

Laurel is where CB&Q met the high-speed main line of its half-owner Northern Pacific. At last, the Night Crawler's engineer shakes the reins of his steel steed, gives it a kick with his spurs, and the short consist hightails it east out of Laurel as if being chased by armed bandits. It's a thrill to stand out on the rear platform and listen to the E unit's Run-8 roar, as, trailing a rooster tail of dust, we skim past those slowpokes loafing along on adjacent Interstate 90. Hissing that last 15 miles into Billings on smooth, welded rail is in one way the most exciting part of the trip. Then at 4 p.m., 19½ hours after de-

With a friendly wave from the conductor on the rear vestibule steps, No. 29 eases up the siding at Fromberg, Mont., in July 1966, having just met No. 30 holding the main line.

parting Denver, we ease into the station tracks at NP's handsome, long, yellow-brick Billings depot.

After our rides, when my wife and I lived in Fort Collins, Colo., we would hear the chime horn of the Night Crawler's E unit approaching the city limits an hour before midnight. With the engineer using its quieter single horn, the train would rumble through the Colorado State University campus, down the middle of Mason Street, and stop at the depot. After exchanging mail, sometimes dropping a mail storage car, and once in a great while actually discharging or adding a passenger, the train would creep across College Avenue and accelerate out of town. Soon, the melodious chime of its distant horn would waft through the night air as the train hurried off across the high plains toward Wellington and Cheyenne . . . and eventually Billings.

The end for the Night Crawler came in 1967 when the Post Office cancelled its railroad mail sorting contracts. A mail train in everything but name, the Night Crawler, like dozens of similar colorful local trains that were unable to live without mail income, was discontinued. On September 1, 1967, we stepped aboard the quiet, darkened coach one last time for a sad, final trip through the heart of Wyoming and on to Billings on the last No. 29 . . . and an entire way of life vanished. ■



Above, R. S. McGonigal; right, B. G. Corbin, Hol Wagner coll.

Rail mail legacy

Notable Burlington Route RPO survivors By Robert S. McGonigal

Just as mail was crucial to the survival of the Night Crawler, it holds an important place in Burlington Route history. On July 28, 1862, Burlington predecessor Hannibal & St. Joseph launched what is generally accepted as the first Railway Post Office service. The H&StJ began with converted baggage cars, which were soon replaced by purpose-built mail cars. In 1933, for its exhibit at Chicago's Century of Progress fair, CB&Q rebuilt an ex-H&StJ 40-foot baggage car into a replica of one of the 30-foot mail cars of 1862. "H&StJ No. 1" toured the Q system off and on for more than two decades. It's now displayed at the Patee House Museum in St. Joseph, Mo.

Twenty-two years later, on March 11, 1884, CB&Q launched the *Fast Mail* between Chicago and a connection

with the Union Pacific at Council Bluffs, Iowa. The train was among the hottest on Q rails for decades, and the road marked its 75th anniversary by publishing a book about it in 1959.

At least five heavyweight CB&Q-family mail cars survive, four of which are 70-foot baggage-RPO's. Colorado & Southern bag-RPO 254 was a regular on the Night Crawler before going in 1968 to the Colorado Railroad Museum, where it is displayed today. CB&Q bag-RPO 1945 is seen by hundreds of train riders each day at its display site next to the Galesburg, Ill., Amtrak station. Sisters 1923 and 1938 are operational at, respectively, the Illinois Railway Museum at Union and the Fremont & Elkhorn Valley tourist line in Fremont, Nebr. The National Railroad Museum at Green Bay, Wis.,



Museum of Science & Industry: J. B. Spector

CB&Q baggage-RPO 1923 snags a bag (top) at the Illinois Railway Museum in September 2008. The Q's H&StJ No. 1 replica was at Red Oak, Iowa, in April '59. The *Pioneer Zephyr's* RPO interior has been beautifully restored.

is home to 60-foot full-RPO No. 2330.

The most-visited and best-restored Burlington RPO is part of one of the most famous and influential trains in history, the *Pioneer Zephyr*. The three-car articulated streamliner retired to Chicago's Museum of Science & Industry in 1960 as an outdoor display. After a complete refurbishment, the *Zephyr* moved inside and reopened as a star exhibit in 1998. The RPO area, located in the power car, is a major part of the multi-media exhibit, toured by hundreds of thousands of people each year. ■

Missouri Pacific's "LEMON" Berkshires

Rough-riding and poor steamers,
the five International-Great Northern
2-8-4's didn't live up to the A-1 ideal

By Hugo Lackman • Photos by Ralph H. Carlson

One of the fascinating aspects of being actively involved in firing and running steam locomotives was discovering that each one had its own personality. In the case of a class of engines, sometimes the entire group would demonstrate similar characteristics, but seemingly there would always be one or more in the class that were superior to their stablemates. Occasionally, though, a manufacturer would produce a class of "lemons," for which any reasonable explanation for the deficiency is elusive.

This was the case, in my opinion, with Missouri Pacific's obscure group of five 1121-series 2-8-4 Berkshires, built by American Locomotive Co. in November 1928 for MP's International-Great Northern subsidiary. I observed these engines for several years running into Houston before I hired out there with the I-GN as a student fireman in March 1942. At that time, I was looking forward to working on the 2-8-4's because I considered them to be state-of-the-art Super Power. The reality turned out to be somewhat disappointing.

The I-GN, known to many as "the Jenny," totaled 1,159 miles, all in the Lone Star State, with main lines extending from Longview (on the main line of Texas & Pacific, also an MP property) southwest through Palestine (PAL-uh-steen) and San Antonio to Laredo; from Palestine south to Houston; and from Houston north to Fort Worth. Dating from an 1873 merger that created the International & Great Northern, the road emerged from a second receivership in 1914 as the I-GN (with a hyphen); it became part of the MoPac family in 1924.

By 1928, the I-GN was working with a reliable group of 4-6-0's ["Ten-Wheelers You Could Count On," Summer 2007 CLASSIC TRAINS] and classes of 22 Consolidations, 10 light Mikados from the early 1920s, and 10 somewhat larger Mikes from 1926. The latter were part of a push for new power by parent MP, which for I-GN included five big 4-6-2's and five modern 0-8-0's.

The five 2-8-4's were part of this push, being patterned after Lima's A-1 prototype, which MoPac had tested in 1926. The 1121-1125 series shared basic specs with 55 Boston &



Albany, 25 Boston & Maine, and 50 Illinois Central 2-8-4's, all built by Lima during 1926-1930, and 12 Alco 2-8-4's for Chicago & North Western in August and September 1927.

Neil Carlson's authoritative article, "The Berkshire Story," in STEAM GLORY 2 of 2006, documented a generally efficient and successful wheel arrangement. The article's accompanying chart, which compared the variations in 2-8-4 design, was interesting. It seems that these all were an effort to produce a "universal freight locomotive," and most of the engines constructed from these plans, regardless of their builder, met the expectations of their owners as well as doing everything that Super Power proponent Lima had envisioned. The I-GN's perhaps were an exception.

Oddly enough, these five engines were built as coal burners, strange because I-GN locomotives for decades all had been oil-burners except for four light 2-8-2's leased from MP for a lignite-burning experiment. According to the late steam authority Lloyd E. Stagner, in his "Lonesome Lone Star Berkshires" about these same engines in November 1988 TRAINS, the 1121 series debuted on MP's Omaha Division, and I long surmised that they were built as coal burners so MoPac could test them before ordering its own Berks. The latter, 25 in the 1901 series, were Lima-built; both groups were class BK-63. (Interestingly, the 1901-series 2-8-4's were rebuilt into 4-8-4's during 1940-42 at the Sedalia, Mo., shops, with their 63-inch drivers replaced by 75-inch ones.)

Needless to say, the 1121 series—which arrived on I-GN in May 1930 coincident with the arrival up north of the first of



I-GN 2-8-4 1121 (above) leads a freight north of Houston. The author's first student trip firing was on 2-8-2 1117, a sister to 1119, pictured on a southbound freight at Austin, Texas, in January 1948 (right).

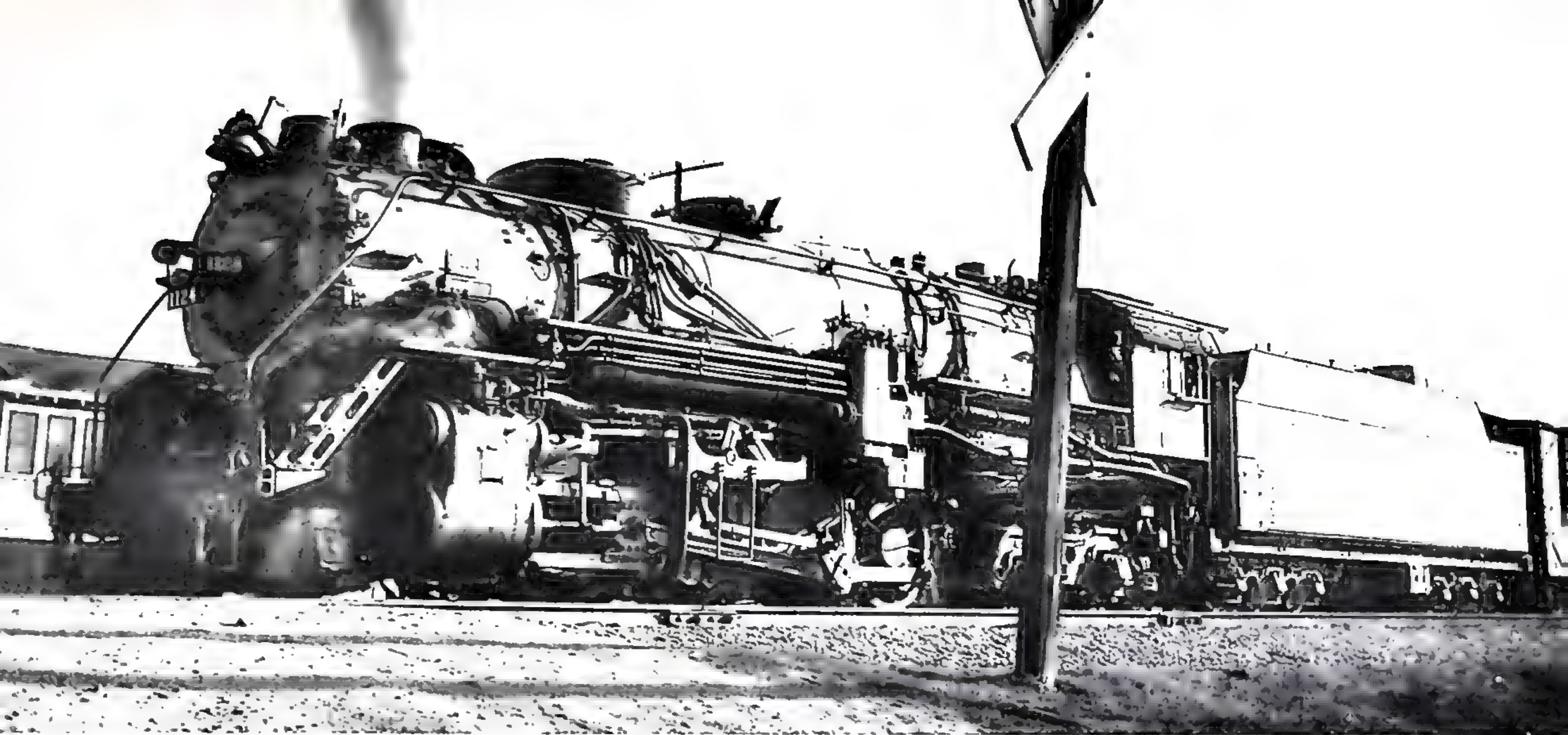
the Limas—worked on the I-GN as oil burners. Records indicate the coal-to-oil conversion was done that June.

My first trip as a student fireman was on 1117, a heavy Mike in the 1111–1120 series. She rode and steamed beautifully, and even though I was a rookie, the engineer gave me an “OK” on my student letter after I’d fired for about 40 miles. I next worked several shifts in the yard, then made an unofficial trip to Galveston on a passenger train before finally climbing onto a 2-8-4, the 1124, to make a night run to Palestine, 154 miles north. I was with an excellent crew who put me to work on the left side as soon as we started. I soon found, though, that the 1124 was not the engine 1117 was; the 2-8-4’s fire was harder to regulate, and she was a surprisingly rough rider. I made another trip on 1124, but it was no better than the first.

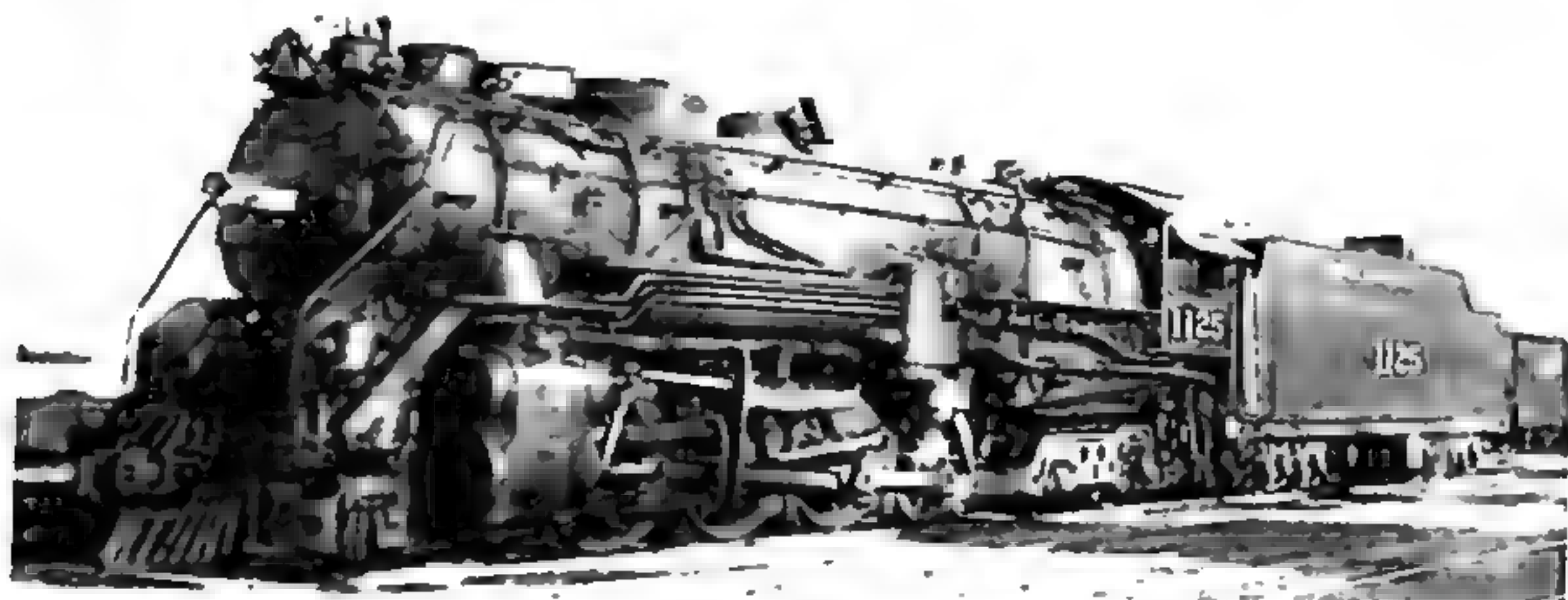
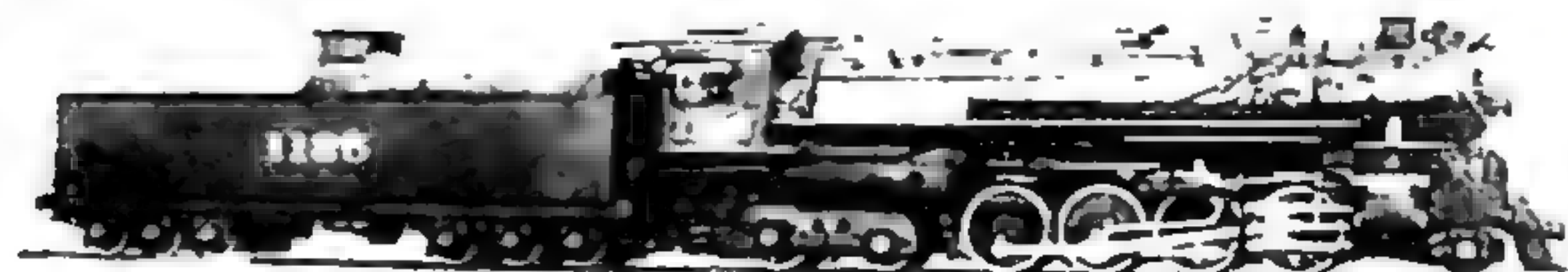
Students had to pay their own way in those days, and I was short on money, so I kept moving and got my final OK in 10 days. In the following few months I worked a variety of jobs off the Houston extra board, then got cut off in July, after which I had a brief period of employment on the Santa Fe in Winslow, Ariz. Eventually, after being called back to the I-GN, I worked steadily through winter and spring. In August 1943 I got married, after which we moved to Palestine, where



Bruce F. Wilson



International-Great Northern 2-8-4 1124 is ready to take a freight south out of Longview, Texas, for Palestine on March 10, 1937.



1125 builder's photo from Ralph Carlson collection

The five I-GN 2-8-4's were built as coal burners (top), so MoPac could test them. The 1125 is ready for a run at San Antonio on May 5, 1947.

I worked on a through freight turn until spring 1944, when my U.S. Army draft number came up.

My freight run was mainly on the Taylor Subdivision, part of the 340-mile Longview-San Antonio line on which through freights changed engine crews at Palestine, 81 miles out, and Taylor, 64 miles farther south. Most of our power was 2-8-2's in the 1111 series plus a few 1200's from "the Mop" proper.

Early in 1944, I was called for Second 7, a 16-car troop extra from Palestine to Taylor, with the 1125, which steamed as poorly as the 1124. In the same winter, with snow and ice on the ground, I caught hot train 66, carrying mostly perishables, north out of Taylor with the 1122. I had an extra board engineer, "Hop" Green, with whom I'd worked a number of times, and we'd always gotten along well. On the first hard climb out of Taylor, the 1122 steamed fairly well. From there north it was an 8-mile descent, upon which Hop eased off to just over a half throttle. That's where the rough ride began.

The slack between the engine and tender was excessive—I had no idea an engine with a four-wheel Delta trailing truck

could ride so rough. She would steady out to some extent when working hard, but on this roller-coaster section of line, the beating and pounding was unbelievable. Starting down Gause Hill, a sort of "race track," Hop reduced the throttle opening again, at which time something happened to cause the color of the fire to turn a reddish hue instead of bright yellow . . . and the steam pressure began dropping.

We rolled into Valley Junction, crossing of the Fort Worth-Houston line, and stopped at the water plug. After taking water, I returned to the cab to find Hop peering into the firebox. What a mess! All the brickwork had collapsed, blocking the path of the flame from the burner. We poked around with the carbon bar but could not move any of the tightly wedged bricks. No other engine was in the vicinity, so we decided to proceed and see if we could somehow finish the trip. It was a matter of swapping steam and water, rolling downgrade with the blower on hard while trying to get extra water in the boiler, then struggling upgrade. We made it to the terminal at Palestine with difficulty, hoping we'd never have another such trip. Before leaving for the service, though, in March 1944, I did have a better trip, with the 1121, running 50 to 55 mph with a 36-car stock extra from Taylor to Valley Junction.

Fast forward now to 1946. I had returned to Palestine from my service in the Army's 749th Railway Operating Battalion, in which I'd been promoted to engineer. I'd bid in a freight turn on I-GN's Gulf Division, working to either Houston or Longview. One evening I was called for the night freight to Houston with an extra-board engineer known as "Smoky." He was a grumpy, irritable sort, and to make things worse, our engine was the 1122. We had less than full tonnage, so perhaps the run might not be too bad. The 1122 bucked and slammed around as usual, but she was steaming pretty well until we were downgrade leaving Latexo, when the smoke from the stack became black, the fire turned red, and I thought of the trip I'd made on her earlier.

Smoky stopped at Crockett to take water, and upon checking the firebox I found the brickwork to be intact. When we pulled out, though, the smoking began again, and Smoky

started: "What was the matter. I told him my guess was that the brackets holding the petticoat pipe had been broken from the shaking of the engine, allowing the petticoat pipe to fall down around the exhaust nozzle, which would effectively kill the draft. Smoky continued his tirade about smart-aleck Army men who had run engines for a few months and then came home to tell experienced men a dumb story about petticoat pipes. I kept quiet, since I had my hands full trying to keep water up and a little steam.

We finally reached Houston, looking like fugitives from a coal mine. Smoky made out the work report with the notation "engine not steaming." As luck would have it, that night we were called to go north with the same engine, on train 64. The roundhouse foreman came out, and Smoky asked him what problem he had discovered. The foreman answered that the brackets holding the petticoat had broken, letting the pipe cover the exhaust nozzle, which killed the draft. I'll have to give Smoky credit, he did apologize to me for his unkind remarks earlier, and we had a fair return trip.

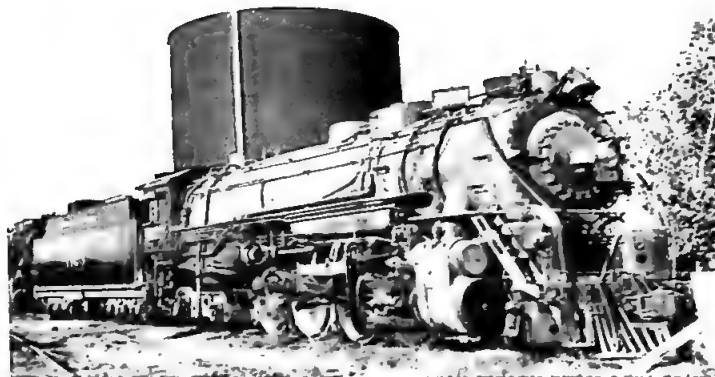
In April 1947, I'd gone north to Longview, and for my southbound return, I drew the 1124 on a 40-car oil train to Palestine. The Berk rode surprisingly well and steamed fine, hitting 55 mph through the bottoms at Reeves, but then she "laid down" on the 1.17 percent grade and we had to double the train to Overton. As often happened, the booster was out of order. If the booster was operable, it could be a great help, but the MoPac theory seemed to be that a booster was intended to pull tonnage rather than to give an extra boost when in danger of stalling on a grade. This resulted in the boosters being inoperative or in the shop for repairs much of the time.

Not every Berkshire trip gave me problems. That same spring, I had the 1123 on first 66 from Palestine north to Longview, and the Berk rode better than usual and steamed well. I was amazed, since I'd come into Palestine from Houston 8 hours earlier with her, and she'd steamed poorly all the way, even though my fireman was experienced. Moreover, no work had been done on her during the layover at Palestine.

I studied the specifications of the various Berkshires in Carlson's 2006 story, and learned that the 1121-1125 group was practically identical to the rest of the A-1's. Our five I-GN 2-8-4's were not without their good points. Their big tenders allowed fewer water stops, and twin air pumps allowed long trains to be pumped up quickly. Further, many enginemen admired their good looks. However, the engines were weak at low speeds—they simply would not lug below about 15 mph. It was mandatory that the boiler pressure be maintained as near 240 PSI as possible, with the water carried at not over half the glass. I've always felt those Berkshires might have been better engines with full cut-off.

My experience with the I-GN 2-8-4's stands in contrast to another group of Super Power engines I knew well, Texas & Pacific's 2-10-4's. I worked many trips on T&P's Texas types and found them to be superb-riding engines. They would pull hard at low speeds and were good steamers. Our five Berks were no faster than our big Mikes, while the big T&P engines, after new rods were installed, were listed as 60-mph engines.

During the latter years of World War II, the *Sunshine Specials*, the MoPac system's premier passenger trains in Texas, were running quite heavy, often with 20 to 22 heavyweight cars. The T&P assigned two of its Texas types to passenger service to handle these long trains from Longview east to Texarkana, 90 miles. At the same time on these trains, the I-GN was doubleheading heavy Pacifics between Palestine and Longview. Then the powers-that-be tried to assign one 2-8-4 to the train; I suppose they thought this could be accomplished, saving the wages of an engine crew. The Berk-



I-GN's 2-8-4's were among the first engines sidelined when traffic fell. September 14, 1950, finds 1123 and 1122 in storage at San Antonio.



H. F. Harvey collection

Two of parent MP's 25 own 2-8-4's, built by Lima in 1935, get under way at a yard believed to be in MP's headquarters city of St. Louis.

shire experiment proved to be a fast failure, though, for after only a month or so, the doubleheading of 4-6-2's resumed and continued into 1946. I was still serving in the Army at that time, but upon returning home I found two Pacifics still on that job.

In 1947, what would total 16 MoPac F3 diesel freight units began to arrive from Electro-Motive Division, and then 16 F7's in 1949, but for two or three years there was still plenty of work on the I-GN lines for heavy steam freight engines. All 20 of our own Mikados were kept busy, and we still had two MoPac Mikes in the 1401 series leased, plus one of the 1201 series. Some 2-8-2's remained in service right up to the end of steam on the I-GN, which occurred in June 1954, according to Lloyd Stagner. I'd been an engineer in the Army, but after my return and promotion to the right-hand side, my very first trip as engineer on the I-GN was on the 1248, which later, ironically, pulled our last steam-powered freight, a day after I had fired her.

To me, it was significant that the 2-8-2's remained in service for so long, while the five Berkshires were the first large freight engines I-GN took out of service and placed in serviceable storage, in 1948 as I recall. Three were stored in Palestine and two in San Antonio. The 1125, and possibly others in the class, were sent north to help out on MoPac's North Little Rock, Ark.-Dupo, Ill., main line during a coal strike in early 1950, but they saw little if any use when they returned to the I-GN. They were retired in spring 1952 and later scrapped. I suppose the reason for the 1121 series' relatively poor performance will forever be a mystery that motive-power enthusiasts may ponder. ■



Riding the Hawkeye

A 1967 branchline freight adventure in the cradle of Illinois railroading

By J. David Ingles • Photos by the author

As you can tell instantly by looking at the photos here, this tale is not about Illinois Central's Chicago-Sioux City, Iowa, *Hawkeye* passenger train. Rather, it's about a lowly Illinois branchline freight, called "the Hawkeye" by railroaders both before and after the October 1964 merger of its former operator, the Wabash Railroad, into the Norfolk & Western Railway. Keokuk, Iowa, the Mississippi River town at the Hawkeye State's southeast-

ern corner, was the destination for the freight, hence the nickname. The monicker "Tri-State Limited" was also heard, because in its later years the train and crew tied up not in Illinois but in Hannibal, Mo.

What separates this branchline operation from hundreds of others across the land is the line's history—its south end was the very first railroad in Illinois, and only the second in the five central Great Lakes states! In 1837, the state legislature passed the Illinois

Internal Improvement Act, which included funding for several railroads. This was early in the railroad game, when rivers were still the primary paths of commerce. A north-south trunk was the anchor—Illinois Central's so-called "charter line" from Cairo on the south, where the Ohio River flows into the Mississippi, north through Decatur and La Salle to Freeport and then west to the mining center of Galena and Dubuque, Iowa, on the Mississippi. At Centralia (named for the Illinois Cen-



Norfolk & Western's "Hawkeye" local freight, with ex-Nickel Plate GP18 2703 in charge and running "backward" (no dual controls, set up short-hood forward), eases into Bowen, Ill., on January 21, 1967, to pick up the author.

tral), the "Chicago Branch" struck northeast to the soon-to-be-metropolis on Lake Michigan.

Intersecting the Cairo–Galena trunk were to be two east-west lines. One was called the Southern Cross, from Mount Carmel on the Wabash River to Alton, where the Illinois River flows into the Mississippi. (Why Alton? It was competing with St. Louis, Mo.) The other was the Northern Cross, connecting Danville (at the Indiana state line) with Decatur, Springfield (the new state capital, replacing Vandalia), and Quincy, on the Mississippi. The name Northern Cross reflected that in the 1830s, the northern half of Illinois was still sparsely settled.

A contract was bid for the building—between fall 1837 and April 1838—in a strip from Meredosia, on the Illinois River, east to Morgan City, 12 miles west of Jacksonville and today not even a ghost town. The first locomotive to operate in Illinois (or anywhere west of the Allegheny Mountains and north of the Ohio River) was named *Rogers*, made in Newark, N.J., by the firm Rog-



Anchoring the rear end was caboose 562796, built in 1947 as Wabash 2796 in the railroad's Decatur, Ill., shop, one of 89 constructed during 1945–55. The portrait above was made at Clayton on the return trip north, and the view of the train at top was made shortly thereafter.

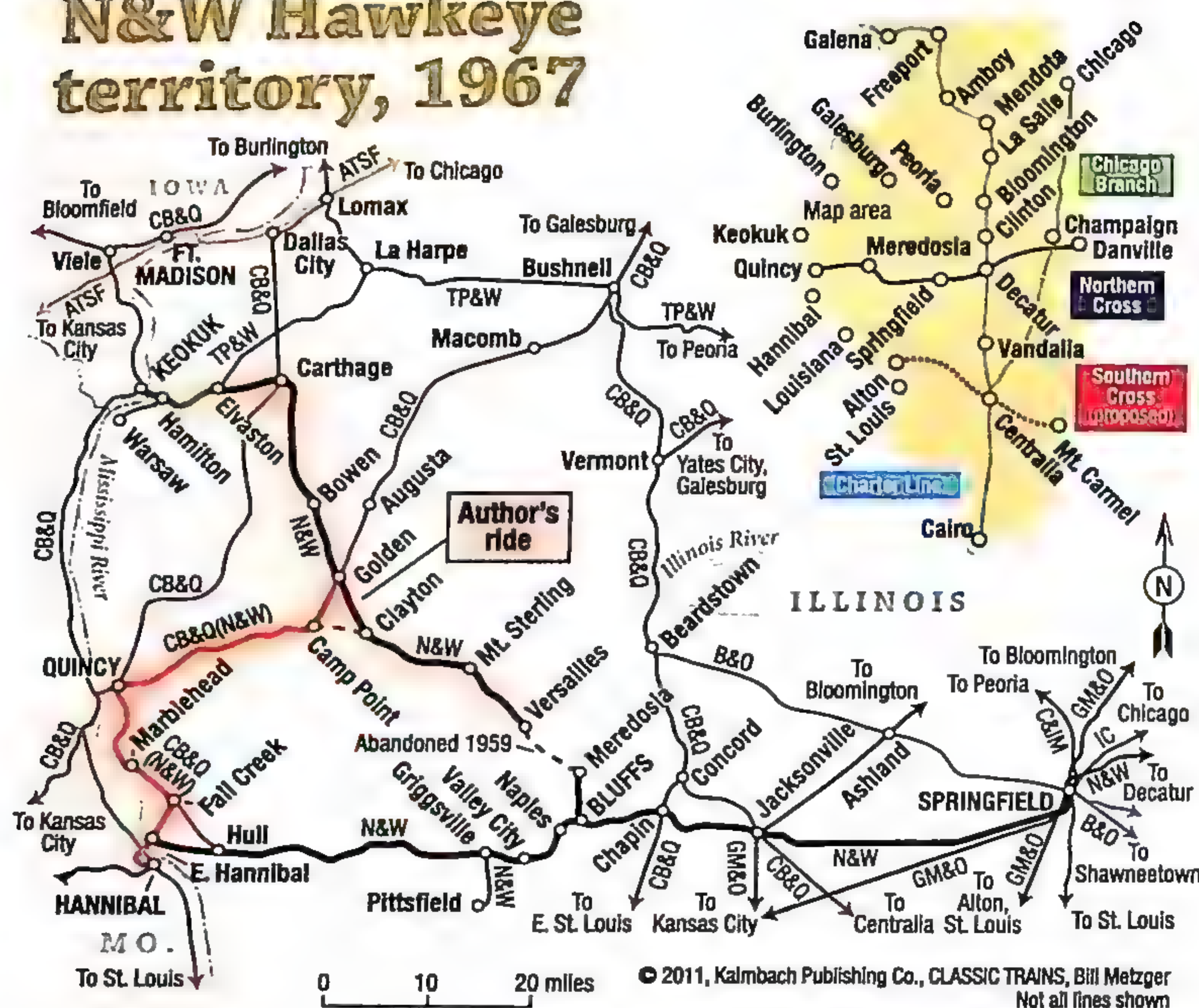
ers, Grosvenor & Ketchum, and shipped in pieces by river to Meredosia. Once assembled, it hauled VIP's 8 miles to end-of-track and back on November 8, 1838.

The line expanded eastward and went through several name changes [chart on following page], and was in its ninth year as Great Western of Illinois

when, on February 11, 1861, its most noted historical event occurred—a GW train carried Abraham Lincoln out of Springfield on the first leg of his trip to Washington to assume the presidency.

So much for early history. Suffice to say the growth of the country and its dependence on railroads, along with

N&W Hawkeye territory, 1967



"N&W" and "CB&Q" coexisted in a narrow time window between mergers of 1964 and 1970.

Wabash's Origins in Western Illinois

- 1838** Illinois' first train, on Northern Cross, runs east from Meredosia 8 miles
- 1842** Through service is available, Meredosia–Jacksonville–Springfield
- 1844** Original Northern Cross locomotive *Rogers* retired
- 1847** State auctions line for \$21,000 to Nicholas Ridgely, who renames it Sangamon & Morgan, for the two counties it serves
- 1853** Great Western of Illinois organized to acquire line
- 1854** Decatur reached from the west
- 1856** Indiana border, east of Danville, Ill., reached from the west
- 1857** Quincy & Toledo organized to build Meredosia–Camp Point (from where rights on a CB&Q predecessor were used to Quincy on the Mississippi River)
- 1857** Illinois & Southern Iowa builds Clayton–Elvaston, secures rights Elvaston–Hamilton on the Toledo, Peoria & Warsaw to reach the Mississippi River opposite Keokuk, Iowa
- 1858** Unbroken rail route in place from Toledo, Ohio, on Lake Erie, to Quincy, via what all would become part of Wabash Railroad.
- 1865** "Wabash" first appears in the line's name as the Toledo, Wabash & Western is created in the merger of the Quincy & Toledo, Great Western, Toledo & Wabash, and Illinois & Southern Iowa
- 1868** Toledo, Wabash & Western extends from Toledo through Bluff City (later Bluffs) to Naples, on the Illinois River, plus Bluff City–Quincy via Clayton, plus the Clayton–Keokuk line
- 1870** Pike County Railroad opens direct Naples–Hannibal line, later part of the Wabash main route and busy today under Norfolk Southern
- 1877** TW&W reorganized as Wabash Railway Co.: 678 miles, including Toledo–Decatur–St. Louis, Decatur–Hannibal, Bluffs–Clayton–Keokuk, and Clayton–Camp Point–Quincy

the continuing dominance of east-west transportation lanes relegated the Bluffs–Keokuk route to what by 1870 was the Wabash Railway into the insignificant branch line that N&W inherited in its October 1964 lease of the Wabash. The branch had its "15 minutes of fame" in the mid-20th century as home for the last Wabash steam locomotives [see following story], but otherwise was unremarked.

Dusk run to Hannibal

During my three and a half years at MacMurray College in Jacksonville, I'd spent many hours in the Wabash/N&W interlocking towers there and in Springfield, but few riding trains locally. In January 1967 I was back in central Illinois after a year's absence, working for the Jacksonville *Journal-Courier* newspaper, and had re-connected with some local railfan friends. One was K. E. "Kenny" Davis, a second-generation Wabash engineer from Decatur. Local freights have always fascinated me, and Kenny, assigned to N&W's Keokuk local over the 11th District, arranged for me to ride with him one weekend.

On the sunny Saturday of January 21, I intercepted his train in early afternoon as it headed south toward Bowen, Ill. In his charge were ex-Nickel Plate GP18 2703, 11 cars, and caboose 562796, an ex-Wabash car homebuilt at Decatur shops. Although the branch's train crew historically was based on the south end of the run—at Bluffs until 1959, when the Meredosia bridge was abandoned, and then at Hannibal—for a time during this period, N&W based the crew at Keokuk Union Depot, whose modest yard was shared with the city's other roads: Burlington, Rock Island, and TP&W.

After taking a couple of action photos, I parked my 1961 Ford trackside in little Bowen and boarded. Nine miles south, at Golden, an empty hopper car and a boxcar awaited our pickup south of the diamond crossing with Burlington's Galesburg–Kansas City main line. After uncoupling the Geep, we had to wait for train 35, the domeliner *Kansas City Zephyr*, to pass before proceeding through the interlocking to fetch the cars and tack them onto the front of our consist. As the afternoon sun waned, we obtained permission to enter the main, and soon enjoyed some fast running for all of 6 miles west to the passing siding just beyond Camp Point. There we whiled away the remaining minutes of daylight waiting until CB&Q's eastbound time freight 74, behind an all-star EMD consist of GP30, GP40, and SD24, rolled by us at dusk.

Unintentionally, after we scooted over the bridge, we headed south, off the main line, to the new (1960) Mississippi River bridge, 63 feet above the normal river level. We went down onto CB&Q's old city trackage through town, rambling onward with our short train through Marblehead 6 more miles to Fall Creek. This Burlington branch in the flat Mississippi River bottomlands, which at one time had stretched from Quincy 50 miles to an Alton Route connection opposite Louisiana, Mo., was anonymous except for having sported the last two railroad covered bridges in Illinois. The 86-foot Howe truss at Hortons over Dutch Creek stood until 1946, and a similar one spanned Kizer Creek at New Canton, lasting into the late 1950s, long enough to feel the passage of EMD diesel switchers towing mixed trains 91 and 92 (sometimes only a coach with a caboose-type cupola).

From Fall Creek, we angled straight southwest to East Hannibal, Ill., and entered N&W's Decatur-Kansas City main, today's "Automotive Artery" for Norfolk Southern. We crossed the moveable bridge across the Mississippi, where the first rail bridge here (and at Keokuk) dated from 1871. Just off the bridge, we clanked across the diamond of CB&Q's St. Louis-West Quincy-Burlington river line, curved through the former Wabash's only tunnel, in the river bluff, and ambled south alongside the Q through downtown, turning west to N&W's Outer Depot yard. After the



At Golden, we waited for CB&Q's *Kansas City Zephyr* to pass (top), then crossed the Q (middle) to get two cars, and were ready to go west (above).



Pat Riley collection; courtesy Kenny Davis

A Wabash 4-4-0 moves west past the road's own Camp Point station early in the century, on the original Northern Cross route to Quincy.



steps through Hannibal and up through rural southern Adams County, Ill., with about a dozen cars behind the 2703, now properly pointed short-hood forward. The sun was just peeking over the horizon and through the trees when we stopped to switch the Black and White cement plant at Marblehead on the jointly used CB&Q-N&W line. Other customers at Marblehead included Mickeys, a scrap firm, and Prince Chemical Co.; to this day BNSF, through switching contractor Burlington Junction, enjoys lucrative local business on the south end of this Quincy spur. (The track goes 7 miles but no longer to Marblehead. In Quincy, virtually all traces of the "isolated" Wabash city trackage and its structures are gone.)

Tracing history in the daytime

The morning began on the foggy side, and out of Quincy, we enjoyed an uninterrupted 28-mile run on the CB&Q main over to Golden. Customarily, the Hawkeye would work the spur south of Golden on its southbound run, Kenny Davis tells me, but this time the crew saved it for the northbound return. The track still went 27 miles to Versailles, last town before the river at Meredosia, but he recalls going beyond Mount Sterling, 18 miles out of Golden, only two or three times.

This day, though, we were in luck—this was one of those times, as there was a pick-up at Versailles, a freshly loaded gondola full of logs. Well, I was in luck. The crew? Not so much, as it meant a longer day. We left our three or four cars and caboose at Mount Ster-



CB&Q's Camp Point depot (middle) was west of the old Wabash junction on the north side of the tracks. West of town after sunset, we waited in the hole for Q freight 74 to pass (above).

train was secured, Kenny and I went to the ancient Marion Hotel, across from the modern passenger depot, which was still in use (for a few more months) by CB&Q's overnight St. Louis-Burling-

ton-Minneapolis local, the former *Zephyr Rocket*, run in conjunction with RI.

It was a short night, as the crews were called on their 8-hour rest, and in the pre-dawn hours we retraced our



Sunrise on Sunday morning found us at Marblehead, Ill., switching the Black and White Cement plant. North of here today, the Quincy end of this old CB&Q line with N&W rights still has rail customers.

Engineer Davis made only a few trips down to Versailles on the Hawkeye, but our trip was one such instance, when a freshly loaded gondola of logs awaited our pickup. The mileage is from Detroit.



Pat Riley collection; courtesy Kenny Davis

At Clayton we look west, toward Quincy, in views perhaps a half century apart. Tracks curving to the right are the line to Keokuk.

ling and crept the last few miles on rickety jointed rail, still in heavy fog. I listened, in vain, for the ghostly sounds of those turn-of-the-century 2-6-0's, now a dozen years gone.

With the car of logs in tow, we eased back to Mount Sterling, did some switching and then—now with the sun clearing away the fog—proceeded back to Clayton. The depot sat parallel with the original, direct line over to Camp Point en route to Quincy, west of the switch where the Keokuk line diverged. At one time, a small roundhouse sat west of the depot [above]. Our consist into town was five cars, the cabooses, and a boxcar on the rear that we had fetched at Mount Sterling.

Our crew wanted that rear boxcar to be ahead of the engine for placement on



a sidetrack with a facing-point switch (i.e., our direction of travel), and so performed the maneuver common to local crews everywhere, even though it went against the rulebook: a "Dutch drop," or "flying switch." A brakeman alights at the switch; the train backs up and stops, then moves forward, gaining

speed. The other brakeman rides the car to be shunted onto the sidetrack; as the train moves, the brakeman pulls the coupler pin and the engine accelerates ahead. As it clears the switch, the man on the ground throws the switch, diverting the car onto the sidetrack. The brakeman riding the car uses the hand-



At Clayton, ready to make the "drop" of the boxcar behind the caboose onto the straight track, the train backs up eastward before pulling ahead.

Serendipity on the Burlington Route

After our Norfolk & Western "Hawkeye" adventure down to Hannibal, Mo., and back described on the accompanying pages, both Kenny Davis and I had a free morning. Neither of us can remember where we tied up for Sunday night, or whose vehicle we used, but the next morning, we were up at nearby Fort Madison, Iowa, photographing a few Santa Fe diesels at the Shopton terminal. As we were preparing to leave, we heard a horn just to the north, and "Holy Cow!"—what should putter by on CB&Q's river line but an SW1 with four freight cars and a short combine coach! (That track here is busy today with coal, as BNSF's "K Line" linking Burlington, West Quincy, and St. Louis.)

We quickly deduced this to be the mixed train for Bloomfield, Iowa, on a branch that diverged over at Viele, 6 miles out of Fort Madison. We gave chase immediately, hightailing it out of town on Highway 2 until we came to a grade crossing. Soon the little train came along. We took a photo, then headed for the next town, Donnellson. The *Official Guide* listing had train 77 operating Monday through Friday, leaving Fort Madison at 8:15 a.m., turning at Bloomfield from 11:15 to 11:45 to become train 78, and arriving back in Fort Madison at 2:25 p.m. Amazingly, this and a few other CB&Q mixed trains—which undoubtedly could count their revenue riders per year on two hands—lasted as passenger-carriers at least another year, some perhaps longer.

As with the train on the Minneapolis & St. Louis Story City (Iowa) branch described in Summer 2010 *CLASSIC TRAINS*, most such branchline schedules were largely theory, and proof for this example came quickly. At

An abbreviated chase of CB&Q mixed train 77, which interrupted our photographing Santa Fe diesels at Shopton in Fort Madison, resulted in these photos. We waited at the Highway 2 crossing for our first shot (right), then went on to Donnellson (other two photos), where the crew stopped and promptly went to lunch! The Donnellson depot still stands, on-site, as a city park display.

Donnellson, only 14 miles out, the little mixed rolled up to the depot and stopped, having made a stop somewhere to set out the lead B&O boxcar. We took photos from all angles, and chatted with the crew, who disembarked. We have no remembrance if they told us if they were going all the way to Bloomfield that day or not; what we do recall is that they said at this moment, they were going off for lunch!

So, since they would not resume their trek west for a bit, Kenny and I contented ourselves with our two photo ops and went on our own way. In retrospect, we probably should have stuck it out, but in hindsight, life is full of such rail hobby regrets.

For me, though, the little mixed was just the first half of Burlington Route serendipity this day. As I was en route back to Jacksonville, mid-afternoon found me in Macomb, Ill. This county seat and university town at the time rated a switch engine, and this being a weekday, the crew was at work. In fact, they were just finishing up as I arrived in town, so I was able to obtain a photo (right). So what, you ask? Their assigned power was not a locomotive, but motor car 9735, itself a former branchline veteran! The car survives today, in a Minnesota museum collection.—J.D.I.



ake to ... and the engine
n now ... back and couple
the front ... end of the car.

In our case, the old main line toward
Camp Point, to the left of the Clayton
depot as our train faced west, was the
sidetrack." With an opportunity for a
couple of lineside photos of our train, I
had disembarked when we first pulled
up to the depot. The train, with the en-
tire short consist in tow, then backed
east of the switch, and the drop maneu-
ver was begun. As is almost always the
case, everything went fine . . . for the
moment. The train cleared the switch
on the Keokuk line. The brakeman
threw the switch. The uncoupled box-
car rolled toward Camp Point. The man
riding the car began twisting the hand-
brake wheel, but . . . the car kept rolling
. . . and rolling. I, and I'm sure the rest
of us, gulped a couple of times. I did not
press my camera shutter.

The brakeman finally got the boxcar



At the throttle of 2703, engineer Davis was a professional, concentrating on his task at hand.



Burlington motor car 9735, a 1925 Pullman-EMC veteran retired in 1969, was assigned as Macomb, Ill., switcher, and just tying up for the day.





After stopping at Elvaston (top) to call the TP&W dispatcher, we headed west on the "Tip-Up," making a short photo stop at Hamilton while awaiting clearance to cross the Mississippi River.

stopped, though a bit further west than planned, so no harm done. It's not as if the car would've done any real damage, as the old Camp Point track extended only about a city block, but a car in the weeds, or in the dirt at end of track, still would've drawn official attention. As my engineer friend said, "Our mistake was putting the car in the siding instead of the engine, because it is much easier for the engineer to stop the locomotive, even with a few cars along, than it is for a trainman to stop a car with its handbrake. But it saves a move doing it the wrong way."

After the freedom-seeking boxcar was rightfully positioned, the crew finished switching at Clayton and we headed north with five cars ahead of the caboose, where I rode for a while. At Carthage, after adhering to the stop-and-proceed sign at the diamond of a CB&Q branch, we stopped to switch, and when we left town, our consist was down to two gondolas. At Elvaston, I was back up front when we stopped at TP&W's small metal depot to get clearance from its dispatcher in East Peoria to enter the main line. I dropped off for a quick photo at Hamilton as we stopped to await clearance across the joint rail/highway bridge into Keokuk. Once into Iowa, I disembarked again while the crew put the train away in the yard. There was a remarkable, non-N&W postscript ahead [previous pages], but first, Kenny Davis drove me back to Bowen to fetch my car, concluding my "tri-state adventure" on this historic Illinois rail route. In retrospect, I consider it the "rarest mileage" I've ridden in my native state. ■



Keokuk Union Depot, whose building in 2010 became city property, in its day served all four roads: Burlington, Rock Island, TP&W, and Wabash.



Don Hofsommer

Publication of this photo, with a note from the photographer, in July 1954 *TRAINS* was apparently what first alerted the world about the 2-6-0's.

The Keokuk line's 15 minutes of fame

In the mid-1950s,
it hosted Wabash's
last active steam

By J. David Ingles

Wabash's branch to Keokuk, Iowa, likely would have continued to its end in anonymity had it not been for the elderly and spindly Illinois River bridge at Meredosia, Ill., the town where, ironically, Illinois' first railroad was launched. The seven-span through-truss structure, with one swing span, was too weak to carry what by the early 1950s had become the road's branchline power of choice, EMD's GP7 and GP9 diesels, of which Wabash had 46. So a handful of ancient but attractive 62-ton 2-6-0's were quietly kept active at the tiny terminal at Bluffs, Ill., on the Decatur-Kansas City main line, to work the branch. (The bridge, which dated from about 1858, was also used for wagon, motor vehicle, and foot traffic into the mid-1930s until a highway bridge was built just upriver.)

The glare of publicity focused on the Moguls after Wabash declared itself 100 percent dieselized in 1953. Seemingly as always, though, railfans knew better, specifically noted historian Don Hofsommer, then of Spencer, Iowa, whose letter to *TRAINS* appeared (with the photo above) in the July 1954 "Railway Post Office" reader letters column. Wrote Don: "[In April 1954 *TRAINS*] you said that it wasn't too long ago that the Wabash ran old 2-6-0's on branch lines in Missouri. This photo . . . was taken October 18, 1953, just west of Carthage, Ill. At this time, Wabash still had three Moguls. . . . Of the three, the 573 is in the best shape, having been thoroughly overhauled about two years ago."

And so the word was out.

Following up, itinerant steam-hunters David P. Morgan, editor of *TRAINS*, and his traveling sidekick, photogra-

pher Philip R. Hastings, made sure to stop by Bluffs during their travels. They chased a doubleheader of 573 and 576 north in September 1954, and the trek was a component of "The Quaint and the Quiet," four pages in the July 1955 *TRAINS* installment of the "Smoke Over the Prairies" series. (The bridge would hold only one 2-6-0 at a time, however, at a top speed of 6 mph.) The Moguls' fame has continued as the series became part of a hardcover book [*The Mohawk That Refused to Abdicate, and Other Tales*, Kalmbach, 1975] and recently, inclusion in a *CLASSIC TRAINS* special issue series, *IN SEARCH OF STEAM*. The Bluffs 2-6-0's appear in the first edition (1953-54), on pages 86-93.

According to Wabash historian Rob Adams, five of the Class F-4 2-6-0's, built in 1899 by Richmond Locomotive Works (a part of Alco after 1901), lasted



Top, Don Hofsommer; above, Phillip R. Hastings

Just uncoupled from its train, Mogul 573 (top) looks spiffy at Keokuk on October 18, 1953. At Bluffs in fall '54 (above), the engineer is ready to "oil around" on 576 as the fireman looks on.

into 1952 for Keokuk branch service: 569, 571, 573, 576, and 587. (Their original numbers were in the 700's.) The 569 last ran in 1953 and was scrapped in June '55; 571 preceded her, last running in August '52 and being cut up in July '53; 587 finished her career in August '54 and was scrapped in September '55.

So by the time Morgan and Hastings

called at Bluffs, only the two they chased remained. The 576 was the last one in service, surviving into early February '55, and was scrapped on June 29 of that year. The 573 apparently made her last run on January 28, 1955, but that summer was donated by Wabash to the Museum of Transportation in St. Louis, where she reposes today, albeit

looking dowdy [see "Steam Section"]

Van McCullough, who was a young Wabash employee fired by Moguls, told historian Chet French that Bluffs-Keokuk trains 3 and 12 would see doubleheaders only when necessary. (The ruling grade, between Meredosia and Versailles, entailed a 3-mile, 2-percent climb.) Between December 10, 1950, and January 17, 1951, for example, doubleheaders employing 569, 573, and 576 ran on 12 of the 36 trips toward Keokuk. The 587 was the regular engine on a second branch train, the Mount Sterling local, a turn from Bluffs which could run that far, although it often turned back short because its main duty was to keep the Central Illinois Public Service power plant at Meredosia supplied with coal, sometimes 30 cars a day. On some days, more than one trip from Bluffs was required to get all the coal to the power plant, and McCullough recalls that a few times, 587 brought almost 50 empty hoppers across the valley to Bluffs by herself.

Contrasting 1953 vs. 1967

We can peek back to compare my 1967 "Hawkeye" ride with a typical steam-powered Keokuk run thanks to a piece McCullough wrote in the May-June 2005 newsletter of the Quincy (Ill.) Society of Model Engineers, describing a composite Bluffs-Keokuk round trip in 1953. One difference from McCullough's train and the one Morgan and Hastings chased in fall '54 is that the composite was not in harvest season, employing only engine 573 vs. the doubleheader Morgan and Hastings found. Also, McCullough placed GP7 461, not Mogul 587, in charge of an extra train of coal to the power plant.

In the composite, McCullough, now retired from a clergy career and living in Jacksonville, Ill., was fireman with Bob Turek, conductor; Neal Fink, engineer; and George Effrein and Fred Stephan, brakemen. (Fink, a Wabash historian now deceased, wrote "Wabash's Phantom N Class," on the road's possible 2-10-4's, in Fall 2003 CLASSIC TRAINS. The other names are Van's QSME buddies.)

After making up their own train in the yard, they left Bluffs at 9:05 a.m. with 10 cars plus caboose 2709, and made five stops to set out cars: Versailles, Hersman, Mount Sterling, Chatton, and Denver. Track speed was 25 mph, but they would get up to 35 making a run for the hill up to Versailles, which cut speed to 7 mph. They made a water stop at the east end of the Meredosia bridge; Bowen was the lunch stop. Commodities handled included car-



Philip R. Hastings

Against a backdrop of CIPS's Meredosia power plant, 576 creeps west on a September '54 Sunday in a photo from the Morgan-Hastings travels.

loads of scrap iron, gasoline, livestock, and soybeans, plus LCL freight, carried in the "merchandise car," a boxcar placed right behind the engine and in which the head brakeman often rode. To save a car charge across the city-owned Keokuk bridge, the merchandise car was set out at Carthage, westernmost point for LCL business.

Registering at the Elvaston depot changed the train from Wabash 3 to TP&W 43, and on this typical trip, they arrived in Keokuk at 2:30 p.m. After turning and servicing the Mogul, they were on their way back by 3:40, with six cars plus the caboose, rated at 690 adjusted tons. After a stop at Carthage to top off water, they made pick-ups at Bowen, Timewell, and Mount Sterling.

The latter was two cars of hogs, which were customarily not loaded into the stock cars until the train arrived, this time at 6:50 p.m. The hog firm's manager would loan the train crew his auto to go have dinner while the hogs were loaded, and the train resumed its run at 8:15. They returned to Bluffs with an 820-ton train and marked off duty at 10:40 to conclude a workday of 14 hours 40 minutes (at the time, maximum was 16 hours). Like Bill Armstrong's tale of M&StL's Story City (Iowa) branch in the 1940s in Summer 2010 CLASSIC TRAINS, this is good, general history about American small-town railroading of a half century ago.

Cameos before the final curtain

Morgan and Hastings were just in time for the "real show" with the Moguls, though, come to find out. This is because in their last months, the 2-6-0's were making only cameo appearances. Beginning about October 1, 1954, they ran only the 6½ miles to, and then across, the Meredosia bridge (one at a time, of course), as Wabash had installed a short engine spur just beyond it. There, a Wabash diesel was stationed

to take the train to Keokuk and back, while the 2-6-0(s) stayed on the spur during the day and took the train back to Bluffs on the return. In early '55, Wabash killed the Moguls by leasing two Pennsylvania GE 44-ton diesels, 9313 and 9318, to run between Bluffs and the Meredosia spur, where a "larger" Wabash unit, SW1 No. 111, took over. This operation lasted until November 1, 1959, when the bridge was taken out of service and the 7.6-mile Meredosia-Versailles line segment abandoned.

The bridge retirement was not a singular event. The U.S. Corps of Engineers wanted both it and the mainline span at Valley City, Ill., 10 miles downstream on the Illinois, removed, as both had narrow openings for the navigation channel, and river barges frequently would collide with the bridge piers. The new Valley City bridge was one of several big improvements systemwide begun by Wabash in the mid-'50s. New or improved yards were put in service in North Kansas City, Mo., Lafayette, Ind., and suburban Detroit (Oakwood yard). Centralized Traffic Control, with concurrent single-tracking, was expanded around Danville, Ill., and between Salisbury and Carrollton, Mo.

With the historic route severed, the Keokuk train moved to a new route. According to records that Chet French provided fellow Wabash historian Gary Roe, effective November 1, 1959, the daily Bluffs-based job was abolished, as was the Outer Depot (Hannibal)-Quincy turnaround switch local. They were replaced on November 2-3 by a daily Outer Depot-Keokuk job, using the CB&Q rights between East Hannibal, Quincy, and Golden, plus a switch job at Quincy, where Wabash had lucrative

KEOKUK BRANCH—11th District

Westward THIRD CLASS 3	Distance from Detroit	Time-Table No. 38 In Effect Feb. 26, 1950	Station number	Eastward THIRD CLASS 12
Local Freight		STATIONS		Local Freight
Daily				Daily
AM				PM
8.16	455.4	BLUFFS	189	6.50
8.35	471.4	MEREDOSIA	191	6.20
8.47	478.4	PERRY SPRINGS	198	6.04
8.59	479.0	VERSAILLES	195	5.49
9.08	482.1	GILBERTS	197	5.39
9.19	485.4	HERDSMAN	199	5.29
9.47	488.0	MT. STERLING	201	5.20
10.03	494.0	TIMWELL	203	5.03
10.19	498.9	CLAYTON	205	4.50
10.30	502.7	BLACKS	221	4.39
10.42	506.6	GOLDEN	223	4.20
10.51	508.6	CHATTON	225	4.20
11.10	514.8	BOWEN	227	4.06
11.23	519.9	DENVER	229	3.53
11.33	522.9	BENTLEY	231	3.40
11.57	528.0	CARTHAGE	233	3.25
12.22	533.4	ELVASTON	235	3.05
12.32	539.9	HAMILTON	237	2.40
1.30	541.2	KEOKUK	239	2.30
PM				PM
Daily				Daily
4.18				4.18
5.4				17.4

RPO mark, R. R. Wallin coll.; timetable, CT coll.

In 1912, the Keokuk & Bluffs RPO rode the 1950s route, but Wabash also ran trains to Quincy via both Hannibal, Mo., and Clayton.

city trackage. By the end of January '60, the second- and third-trick depot operator job at Bluffs had been abolished. After the changeover, Meredosia and Naples were served by a Monday-Friday road-switcher job out of Jacksonville, which interchanged cars with the daily mainline East and West Locals that ran between Decatur and Outer Depot.

Thus did modern requirements on several fronts forever change the obscure branch, setting up the operation I would experience one merger and seven years later. And now, that type of railroading is pretty much all long gone from the American scene. ■



N



Seaboard's backshop at 'West Jax'

Seaboard Air Line's West Jacksonville (Fla.) shops played an important part in maintaining the railroad's locomotives and rolling stock. Laid out along the main line to Tallahassee just west of downtown Jacksonville, the facilities originated with SAL predecessor Florida Central & Peninsular Railway, and became a major repair and rebuilding center when SAL erected an extensive locomotive backshop there in 1910. The shops played a key role in SAL's postwar modernization and dieselization program when, in 1947, SAL consolidated all its heavy locomotive repairs at "West Jax." Several new buildings were erected, and after the end of steam about 1951, older buildings were converted for diesel use.

Seaboard relied on West Jax for most of its rebuilt diesel engines and traction motors, and the shop specialized in EMD components. Most units were repainted there as well. The shops' other major assignment was freight cars; West Jax was one of two SAL shops that carried out program freight-car rebuilding. (The second was Portsmouth, Va., which also handled all heavy passenger-car repairs.) A moderate-size freight yard took care of local switching needs, but major classification took place elsewhere on the system, including at the nearby yards at Baldwin, Fla., and Savannah, Ga.

West Jacksonville remained central to SAL operations until the 1967 Seaboard Coast Line merger, after which diesel repairs and freight-car work were soon moved to the ex-ACL shops at Waycross, Ga. West Jax fell victim to SCL's (and successor Seaboard System's) wholesale downsizing of the late 1970s, and by the mid-'80s nearly all facilities and trackage were removed. The site today is occupied by CSX's main dispatching center, office-car storage tracks, and a bulk-commodity transfer facility.

This photo shows the shops in the late 1940s. The scene is dominated by the steam locomotive backshop, turntable, and roundhouse, but the new diesel shop at lower right signals the imminent transition to diesel heavy repair. The mix of steam and diesel locomotives is accented by two of Seaboard's Baldwin Centipedes, directly west and east of the turntable.—*Larry Goolsby*

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 Main line to Tallahassee | 10 Steam locomotive backshops |
| 2 Main line to Jacksonville | 11 Storehouse |
| 3 S. McDuff Avenue | 12 Flue shop |
| 4 Car repair shed | 13 1947 diesel shop |
| 5 Planing mill | 14 Diesel storehouse |
| 6 Wheel and axle shop | 15 Turntable and roundhouse |
| 7 Boiler and engine rooms | 16 Diesel paint shop |
| 8 Blacksmith shop | 17 Drop pit shed |
| 9 Pipe and tin shop; air brake shop | 18 Warrington Street |
| | 19 Fuel oil tank |

Photo: Seaboard Air Line. Research: Larry Goolsby, with assistance from Gary Cassels and David Orr.

The Shaughnessy Files

Scientific **STREAMLINING**



Canadian National U-4: a 6404's rounded contours contrast with the angular lines of a nearby SV2000's diesel switcher, although the 4-8-4's traditional-style signal/marker lamps, bow numberboards, and spoked engine-truck wheels detract from its streamlined appearance.



There was functional logic behind the rakish appearance of Canadian National's class U-4-a Northern

By Jim Shaughnessy • Photos by the author

Streamlining was all the rage in the 1930s, as industrial designers applied rounded, futuristic contours to everything from locomotives and ocean liners to toasters and salt shakers. On North American railroads, revolutionary new internal-combustion trains like Union Pacific's M-10000 and Burlington's *Zephyr* led the way in 1934. Soon, however, many railroads were dressing up existing steam locomotives—and ordering new ones—with sheet-metal coverings that were intended to project an image of speed and modernity to the traveling public.

Most steam streamlining efforts were driven by style and appearance rather than improved operation. The prolific industrial designer Otto Kuhler, in advocating the streamlining of steam locomotives, emphasized the “sales appeal” of such treatments;

function was a secondary concern. In fact, the shrouds and coverings were a major hindrance to even routine maintenance and were fairly soon removed, at least in part, in many instances.

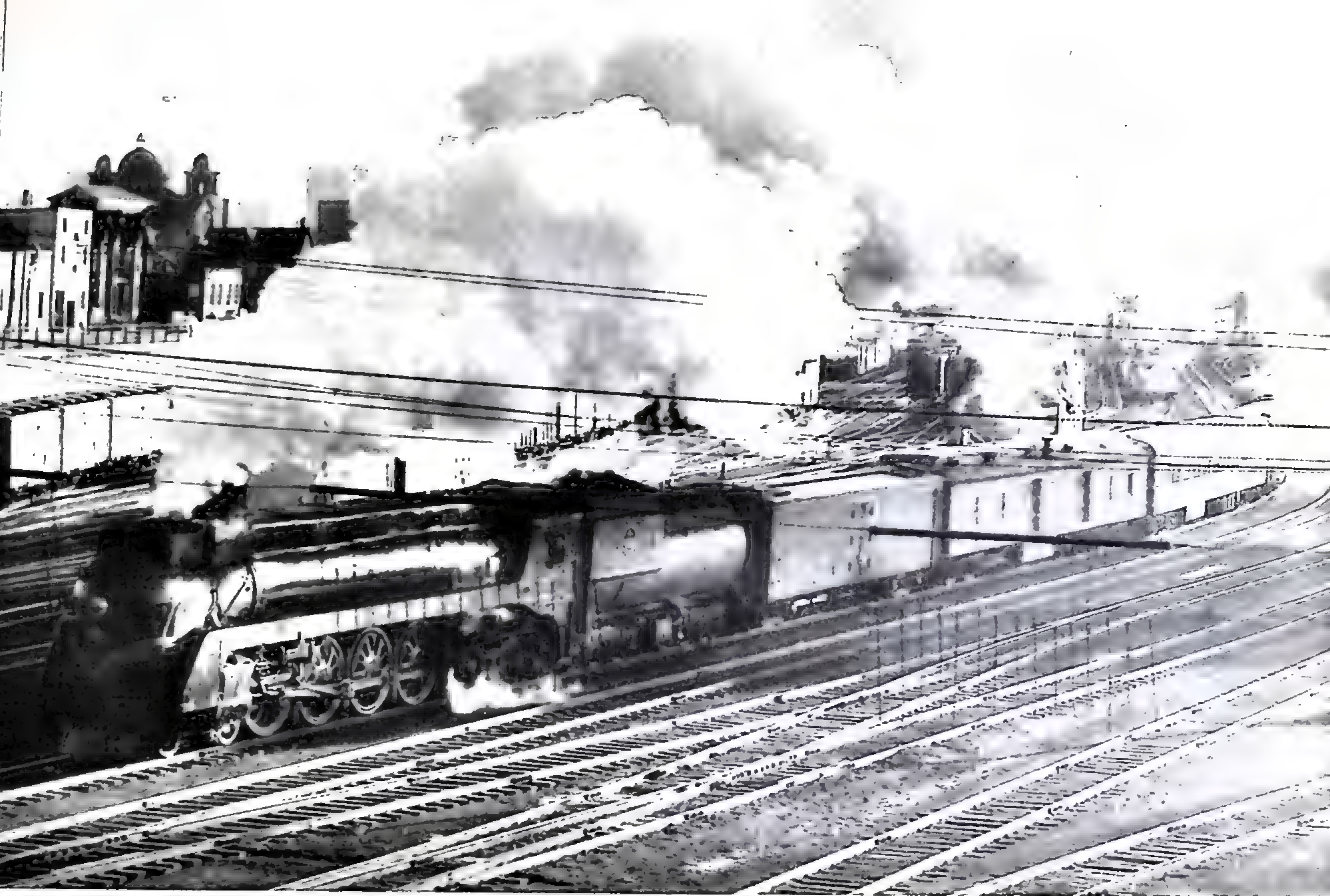
In contrast to other roads, Canadian National Railways developed a streamlined steam locomotive using scientific methods to improve functionality. Though no doubt welcomed, a sleek appearance was a by-product of the effort, not the principal aim. Notably, CN began the effort three years *before* the streamlining craze swept railroading in the mid-1930s.

Forward visibility on steam locomotives had been an issue almost since their inception. Smoke and steam, especially when the engine was not working hard or drifting, tended to swirl back over the boiler and cab, obscuring the engineer's already

The U-4's were striking machines from any angle. Colors were black with green stripes, cab, and tender, accented by gold trim and white tires. Like the one on the opposite page, this scene is at Spadina roundhouse in Toronto, on March 10, 1957.

limited view. Many smoke-lifting configurations and devices were tried by various railroads, with the most successful being parallel plates on either side of the smokebox, often in concert with a flat up-sloping enclosure in front of the boiler face. Called smoke lifters, smoke deflectors, or, more colorfully, “elephant ears,” the parallel plates were applied to locomotives on several railroads, including Delaware & Hudson, Union Pacific, New York Central, Canadian Pacific, and Canadian National, although they were removed from most Canadian locomotives several years prior to their retirement.

Canadian National began to seriously address the smoke problem in 1931 when it was in the process of designing a new group of 4-8-4's. CN asked a team from Canada's National Research Council (NRC) to do a



CN 6403 nears Toronto Union Station with a train from Niagara Falls on a cold March 10, 1957. Apparent in this photo is the curved cab front, a feature intended to lift smoke.



Robert A. Hadley

Grand Trunk Western's U-4-b's were virtual copies of CN's U-4-a's. The most obvious difference was in the openings ahead of the stack, as seen on GTW 6408 hauling train 21.

wind-tunnel study of the basic locomotive shape with an eye toward reducing wind resistance and improving smoke flow. The NRC's John J. Green used two 1:12-scale models of an existing class U-2 4-8-4 and found the smokestack, domes, and other protuberances interfered with the airflow around the locomotive, producing eddy currents that caused smoke to settle close to the top of the boiler. Researchers constructed a cowl for the model's boiler and tested it again. The cowl underwent 27 different modifications before the engineers were satisfied.

The final design embodied a semi-cylindrical casing around the front of the locomotive, topped by a quarter-spherical section where it joined the top of the smokebox. Atop the boiler, from just ahead of the smoke stack back to the cab, a smooth casing enclosed the stack, domes, and other fittings. Louvers at the front of the casing allowed air to rush in around the stack and then be deflected upward, carrying the smoke clear of the boiler and cab. The front of the cab was curved to further contribute to the

up-flow of the air streaming along the boiler surface. The air compressors and turbogenerator were concealed under the front cowl, and the front coupler was hinged so it could be swung out of sight and covered when not in use. The bell was mounted just inside the louvers ahead of the stack, while the whistle hugged the outside of the "skyline" casing on the left side. Since the main aim was to lift smoke above the engine, the design called for no modifications to CN's standard Vanderbilt tender.

CN ordered five of the new 4-8-4's from Montreal Locomotive Works, which delivered them in June and July 1936. Designated class U-4-a, they carried road numbers 6400-6404. The road proudly displayed the 6400 in Montreal's Bonaventure Station and Toronto Union Station. Built for speed, the 6400's had 77-inch drivers, 52,457 lbs. of tractive force, and sported a handsome color scheme in lieu of the

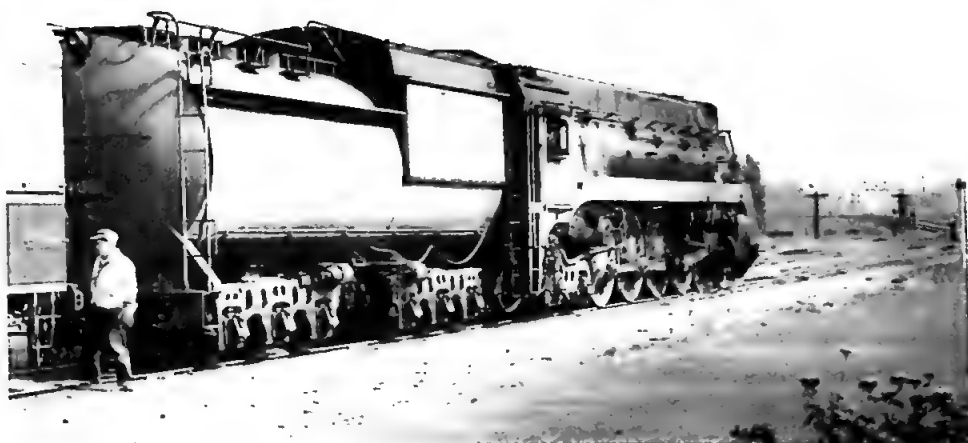
ditional detail. The locomotive's front end and running gear were black, while the running-board skirts, cowling, and tender were green to match CN's passenger cars. Behind the smokebox, the boiler jacket and casing were planished steel. CN assigned the new locomotives to the *International Limited* between Montreal, Toronto, and Sarnia, Ont., where they racked up 10,000 to 14,000 miles a month.

Grand Trunk Western, CN's subsidiary between southeast Michigan and Chicago, received six virtually identical 4-8-4's in July and August 1938. Lima Locomotive Works built these class U-4-b engines, Nos. 6405-6410. A modified louver design ahead of the stack was the most visible departure from the original CN U-4-a's.

As CN's only streamlined locomotives, the U-4-a's enjoyed some brief moments of fame. In 1936, engine 6400 hauled a special train out of Montreal commemorating the 100th anniversary of the opening of the Champlain & St. Lawrence Railroad. Also in 1936, U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt arrived in Kingston, Ont., for the opening of the Thousand Islands International Bridge aboard a special hauled by No. 6402. Painted in a special livery of royal blue and silver, the 6400 handled CN's share of the 1939 Royal Tour of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth, followed by display stints at the 1939-40 New York World's Fair. The CN engines' final royal assignment came when the 6404 and some sisters headed Princess Elizabeth's special train during her visit in 1951, four months before she became Queen.

As with many streamlined steam locomotives, maintenance and repair crews found the cowling, particularly around the smokebox, to be a major hindrance; it took almost a day to remove the cowling just to gain access to the front end of the boiler. However, the U-4's retained their full streamlining for their entire careers. As newer 4-8-4's, and then diesels, joined the CN fleet, the 6400's were demoted to service on local schedules. For many years, into the mid-1950s, a U-4-a would lead heavily patronized CN/CP pool train 15 between CP's Windsor Station in Montreal and Toronto Union Station. In their final years these distinctive locomotives hauled local trains in southern Ontario, including Toronto-Hamilton-Niagara Falls schedules.

The honor of ending an illustrious



At the joint CN-Wabash station in Niagara Falls, Ont., U-4-a 6400 arrives with train 102 from Hamilton and Toronto, is cut off from the train, and backs to the roundhouse. This engine is the sole remaining U-4, displayed at the Canada Science & Technology Museum in Ottawa.

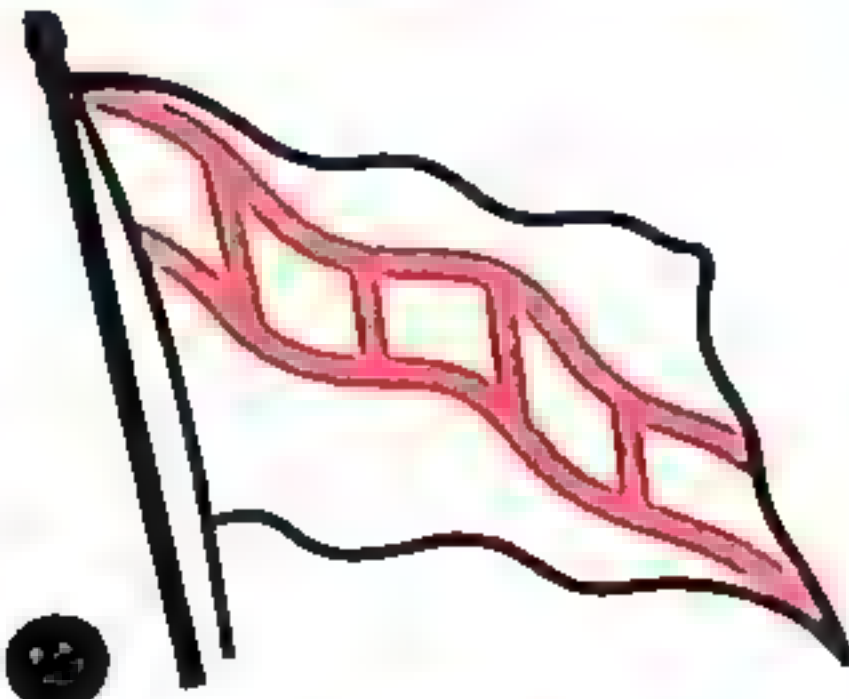
chapter in Canadian transportation history went to U-4-a No. 6402, which on April 15, 1959, led morning commuter train 76 from Hamilton to Toronto. The last GTW U-4-b to run was the 6405, in fall 1959. ■

More on our website
Read more about the CN and GTW streamlined 4-8-4's, and watch video clips of them in action, at our website, www.ClassicTrainsMag.com



SEATRAIN

Railroad or steamship line?



By hauling freight cars thousands of miles aboard seagoing vessels, Seatrain Lines raised the ire of railroad companies and foreshadowed the container revolution

By Robert E. Mohowski

From 1929 to 1970, American railroad freight cars sailed the high seas in domestic and international commerce aboard the ships of Seatrain Lines, Inc. The company and its vessels were the creation of Graham Brush, an ocean passenger line executive and World War I naval aviator. He had attended the Sheffield Scientific School of Yale University and possessed an inventive mind and imaginative entrepreneurial ambition, traits he drew on in developing a faster, more labor-efficient system for moving freight by water.

Brush had the help and encouragement of Joseph Hodgson, who seems to have been almost a partner in the enterprise, and of Clifford Mallory of Mallory Steamship Line. One must also suspect that Brush, either on his own or with partners, noted an ambiguity in ocean and rail shipping regulations that could be exploited in conjunction with his new technology. This ambiguity would lead to lengthy hearings before the Interstate Commerce Commission and an adversarial relationship with U.S. railroads and steamship lines.

Brush formed the Overseas Railway Corp., which contracted with the shipyard of Swan Hunter and Wigham Richardson at Newcastle in England for a new type of ship capable of holding 100 standard North American freight

cars on four decks. Christened *Seatrain*, the 9,078-deadweight-ton vessel was powered by reciprocating steam engines. It had a double hull to prevent minor damage from flooding its cavernous hold, which, unlike most seagoing vessels, was devoid of transverse bulkheads. Launched in November 1928, originally under British registry, *Seatrain* came across the Atlantic and on January 5, 1929, entered service between New Orleans, La., and Havana, Cuba.

A CARGO SHIP FOR RAIL CARS

Each of *Seatrain's* four decks had four tracks running fore and aft. With the exception of those on the weather (top) deck, each track had a loading cradle that was, in essence, a single-track through-plate-girder bridge that could be lifted off the ship by a land-based crane. The weather deck had a single cradle for its four tracks. This is believed to have been a matter of design for maintaining the ship's balance. Each deck's cradles were slightly shorter in length progressing downward, with the shortest being for the lowest deck. This design feature was included to provide clearance for all cradles as they were inserted and extracted. The cradles provided a reasonably tight loading opening for the main and lower decks, so there were no hatch covers to seal the openings. Upper deck cradles

were stacked out of the way on a pier while lower decks were being worked. When a cradle reached its assigned location during loading, cars were moved forward or aft within the ship by cable.

Once in place, cars were secured for the journey with screw jacks, which took the weight off the cars' springs for stability, and wheel chocks. Stationary cranes on the dock lifted the cradles and their cars on and off the ship. The last car loaded on each track was left in place on the cradle and secured there for the sea journey.

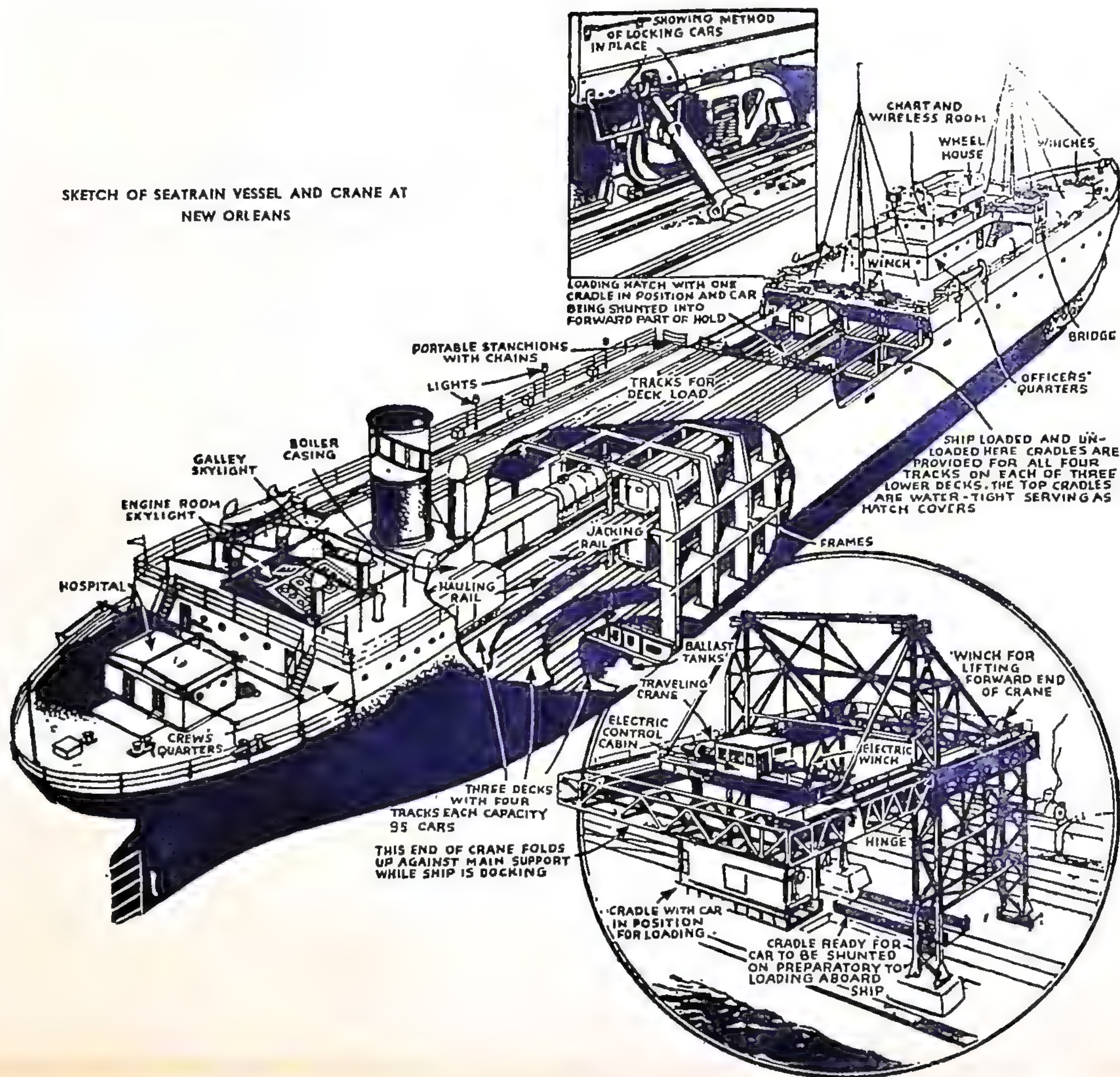
On the weather deck, a 57-foot fore-and-aft opening extended across the beam (width) of the ship and, in the manner of a hatchway, was the opening through which the cradles were raised and lowered. The bulwarks (upper portions of the hull) were cut down some 12 feet at this opening.

Although *Seatrain* carried mostly 40-foot cars, 50-footers could be accommodated, but they required a practice that would not be permitted today. Because of insufficient room at the ends of the cradle, a switchman had to lie between the rails in the cradle while a longer car was pushed over him. He would

Seatrain Texas heads down the Hudson River for the open sea. The top deck is full, except for the loading cradle, below which are visible two boxcars on the next deck's cradles.



SKETCH OF SEATRRAIN VESSEL AND CRANE AT
NEW ORLEANS



Robert E. Mohowski collection

A Seatrain Lines diagram from 1953 shows the arrangement of a typical ship, devices for securing freight cars, and the New Orleans crane.

then place the wheel chocks inboard of the trucks and crawl out.

Seatrain could be unloaded and reloaded in 10 hours, meaning it could spend a far greater percentage of its time at sea than ships using break-bulk handling systems. The ship cut 40 percent or more off standard stevedore charges as well, which meant reduced rates for shippers. Perhaps even a greater advantage was that cargoes remained sealed in the cars, greatly reducing loss and damage claims. Manufacturers and shippers determined what blocking and bracing (dunnage) were necessary inside the cars at time of loading, and these remained in place for the full

journey. A 1932 article claimed that *Seatrain* provided more than 400 million ton-miles of service without a single loss or damage claim.

The company located its New Orleans terminal at Belle Chasse, La., 8½ miles below the Crescent City on the west bank of the Mississippi River. The loading dock and 125-ton-capacity crane were parallel to the shore and sat on wooden pilings. The New Orleans & Lower Coast Railroad, a Missouri Pacific affiliate, provided switching service. At the Cuban end were the Hacendados Docks, which were switched by United Railways of Havana. Transit time between New Orleans and Havana

was a bit more than two days.

Brush's innovative service was a great success, capturing for U.S. manufacturers and suppliers significantly larger shares of Cuban markets. A news article stated *Seatrain* was handling 75 percent of Cuban commerce moving through New Orleans. *Time* magazine reported that in the three years since its inception, the company "ha[d] carried twice as much tonnage between New Orleans and Havana as the three competing shipping lines which operate four times as many vessels." Shippers and consignees noted the advantages of *Seatrain's* system. Stung by the upstart, established sea carriers applied for gov-



U. S. Naval Institute collection

Seatrain Georgia, built in 1951 as one of the last two 1928-style rail car ships, is on the Hudson River at the start of a voyage. The vessels carried mostly boxcars, with tank cars and gondolas a distant second and third. Her colors are gray and white, with red funnel markings.

ernment intervention, charging Brush's company with "ruinous and wasteful competition." On the other hand, railroad companies were happy to have access to Cuba's rail system. But the "era of good feelings" between the steamship company, now operating under the name Seatrain Lines, Inc., and the railroads was soon to change.

EXPANSION MAKES WAVES

In 1932, Seatrain announced an aggressive expansion plan: service between New York and New Orleans via Havana. Rates would be lower than those for an all-rail New York–New Orleans routing. This would lead to years of confrontation with practically all the eastern railroads (especially those with north-south routes), which deluged the ICC with protests. Coastal ship lines also felt threatened, and appealed to the Federal Maritime Commission.

The new service required additional vessels, so the company went to Sun Shipbuilding in Chester, Pa., for two ships to follow the *Seatrain* model. Somewhat larger and faster than the prototype, *Seatrain New York* and *Seatrain Havana* came down the ways in September 1932, near the nadir of the Great Depression. They were the first American cargo ships launched since World War I, an event of such significance that Brush received a congratulatory message from President Hoover. The President was expressing the government's eagerness to revive American shipbuilding and U.S.-flag steamship services; indeed, the ships' construction had been partly financed by loans from the U.S. Shipping Board. The ships

measured 478 feet long, 8,061 gross tons, and 4,927 net tons. The single-shaft, steam-turbine-powered ships could part the waves at 15.5 knots. With their arrival, the original British-built ship was renamed *Seatrain New Orleans*.

Along with construction of the new ships, work was progressing at the foot of 15th Street in Hoboken, N.J., across the Hudson from 27th Street, New York, on a new pier surmounted by a 125-ton crane to transfer cars between ship and shore. Freight cars would be moved on and off the pier by the Hoboken Manufacturers Railroad (later, the Hoboken Shore Railroad), which Seatrain had acquired. The waterfront short line provided access to the national rail network via connections with trunk-line roads.

BRUSH'S GRAND PLAN?

Although no concrete evidence has come to light, it may be that Graham Brush's plan from the start was to compete with traditional rail service for business between the Northeast and the South and Southwest. Building his first ship in Britain and initially employing it only in international service had raised the hackles of steamship lines, but it was welcomed by the railroads as an extension of their reach. However, when Brush announced the New York–Havana–New Orleans service, the railroads fought it vehemently, raising the charge that Seatrain had illegally received both government construction money and a mail contract under false pretense. A key question was: What, exactly, was Seatrain Lines—a steamship line or a railroad? If it was a steamship line, as it claimed, and sailing to a for-

eign nation, which Cuba certainly was, the company was beyond the jurisdiction of the ICC.

However the expanded service was to be defined, it was inaugurated on October 7, 1932, when *Seatrain New York* departed its namesake port with a cargo of freight cars loaded with machinery, paper, beans, steel, olive oil, whale oil, soap grease, soap stock, and cement. Six days later, *Seatrain Havana* kicked off northbound service when it left New Orleans.

Established U.S.-flag steamship companies, including the Munson and Mallory lines and the Florida East Coast Car Ferry Co., objected to Seatrain's receipt of government loans for two new ships that would undercut their business. Further, the steamship lines and the railroads accused Seatrain of using the Havana service and the 1928 Mail Subsidy Act as a subterfuge to move freight cars between New York and New Orleans. Seatrain, they said, was simply an extension of rail service, like the Great Lakes carferries and, as such, should charge the higher rail rates.

In addition, the ship lines and railroads cited Seatrain's ownership of the Hoboken Manufacturers Railroad as well as Missouri Pacific and Texas & Pacific's stock holdings in the company as violations of the Panama Canal Act. This 1912 statute forbade railroads from controlling or owning domestic ship lines that used the Panama Canal and with whom they competed for business. MP and T&P's stock holdings were later judged too minor to constitute control of the company.

Another constant friction point was



U. S. Naval Institute collection

***Seatrain Texas* and *Seatrain Havana* bracket the twin cranes at the new Edgewater pier; the 1932-built ships sport the line's original black-and-white hull colors. Declining coal business (a disused coal pier is just visible at far right) prompted NYS&W to sell the land to Seatrain.**

the fact that Seatrain Lines was not contributing cars to the national freight car pool, but simply using those of the railroads at standard per diem rates. Some roads forbade Seatrain to use their cars. This required reloading of shipments to other cars, which was contrary to Seatrain's business model of not handling break-bulk cargo. They also saw Seatrain as a new service to the Southwest, which the company denied, since the cars it carried were not moving under a continuous bill of lading. Rather, a new bill—at rail rates—was made when the car was off-loaded at New Orleans. While aboard ship, cars moved under a port-to-port rate.

The American Steamship Owners Association and eastern trunk lines claimed that government subsidy in the form of the shipbuilding loans had been detrimental to existing transportation agencies. They said the service

was purely domestic, despite the stop at Havana. Seatrain was also denied membership in the Havana Steamship Conference because of its refusal to charge the higher rail rate. The conference, a shippers' community of interest, was a cooperative ratemaking body but lacked enforceable powers.

From its side, Seatrain argued that the Depression had reduced business to Cuba, and it needed to expand service to avoid financial difficulty. It said that its ships were not at all like the railroad-operated Great Lakes carferries. They were not single deck, open-stern vessels crossing fresh water. Rather, they had multiple internal decks for cargo; sailed thousands of miles per trip over open seas, outside U.S. territorial waters; and served a foreign port and therefore could not be considered a railroad service. Rail cars just happened to contain the cargo they were

moving, Seatrain argued. Further, the company raised countercharges against the railroads of discrimination when the railroads refused to establish joint and through rates. Seatrain was given a six-month waiver to inaugurate service, during which time further regulatory review was made. Permanent approval of the service was later granted.

Marine historian and U.S. Merchant Marine Academy Emeritus Professor Arthur Donovan stated in an academic paper that, "Brush was not to be damned for bending the rules that provided him with a subsidy," but rather to be noted for his "alertness to making regulatory and promotional opportunities work to his benefit." Brush himself was reported as saying at a hearing that, "We cannot be blamed because we have developed a new method of shipping freight which permits us to serve the public at lower cost."

POSTWAR PERIOD, THEN WAR

daunted by its critics, Seatrain in 1932 announced it would expand service to Texas and Texas. Sun Shipbuilding launched six more ships, *Seatrain Texas* and *Seatrain New Jersey*, which were similar to the 1932 pair. The Texas City Board of Trade showed its Lone Star State pride by presenting *Seatrain Texas* with a pair of 6½-foot-long steer horns. Operations began March 29, 1940, when *Seatrain New Orleans* arrived (ship names did not imply assignment to particular routes). The Texas City Terminal Railway, a joint Santa Fe-Missouri Pacific operation, handled the dockside work.

Seatrain's vessels played significant roles in World War II. The four 1932 and '40 ships came under direct Army or Navy control and received several commendations for their actions. The original 1929 *Seatrain New Orleans* operated under General Agency Agreement for most of the war. The ships' capacious holds, large entryways, lack of bulkheads, high cruising speed, and general seaworthiness made them highly useful transports for guns, tanks, and aircraft. With their freight-car rails paved over, king posts and booms to lift cargo added, and defensive armor and weapons installed, off the *Seatrains* sailed to the Atlantic and Pacific theaters. Particularly notable was the voyage of *Seatrain Texas* in summer 1942. After an earlier convoy had been attacked by German U-boats and a shipload of tanks lost, *Seatrain Texas* was loaded with replacements at Brooklyn and made a lone run under great secrecy to Port Taufiq, Egypt. The tanks played a decisive part in the defeat of German forces at El Alamein.

All five ships returned from war duty and were reconverted to commercial service at Sun Shipbuilding. During the interruption of its civilian activities, Seatrain appraised its position in New York Harbor. The Hoboken terminal was very constricted, and getting ships in and out was time-consuming. In October 1945 the New York, Susquehanna & Western announced plans to sell several acres of property along the Hudson at Edgewater, N.J., to Seatrain. Two old wooden coal piers and adjacent land provided space for a two-sided pier on which was mounted a double crane. While this was about 7 miles upstream from Hoboken, opposite 115th Street in New York, it would allow for easier docking and the working of two ships simultaneously, as well as more room for switching and yard trackage. It was at the Edgewater site that Seatrain resumed its New York operations after



South Street Seaport Museum collection

Wearing the line's distinctive stylized railroad track funnel markings, *Seatrain Georgia* and a sister are moored at Edgewater. The dock crane was fixed, so precise positioning was crucial.

HOGGERS' DOCKSIDE MISCHIEF

Switching at both the Hoboken and Edgewater docks was originally handled by four-wheel gas-mechanical locomotives built by Whitcomb Locomotive Works. Hoboken probably had a single unit, while Edgewater's double-side pier initially used a pair of ex-Army Whitcombs. These were later replaced by a 45-ton, four-axle General Electric diesel-electric unit. The Susquehanna also used two tiny Whitcombs, Nos. 150-151. This writer spent a summer employed as a crew caller at the road's Little Ferry Yard. The Seatrain job was not easy to fill, since it paid a lower salary due to the light engines working the dock. Some engineers learned how to snap the chain on the little Whitcombs' drive machinery. Loading the boat was time-sensitive, so right away the call went out for a replacement locomotive, usually one of the Susquehanna's Alco S2 switchers—which meant a higher rate of pay. The roundhouse foreman wasn't happy with having to fix the Whitcomb drive chains, and always threatened an investigation into the incidents.—R.E.M.

Whitcomb 150, elegant in NYS&W maroon and gray, is dwarfed by *Seatrain Texas*; Alco S2's took the cars to Little Ferry Yard.



John Zuidema collection

the war, in March 1947.

Shortly thereafter, on April 16, service was disrupted at Texas City when a French freighter exploded at a chemical plant, destroying much of the industrial waterfront. Seatrain was forced to handle the Texas business via New Orleans until July 31.

The four American-built ships had side tanks with a capacity of 8,000 barrels of liquid cargo. In 1949, the ICC approved Seatrain's haulage of petroleum products south, an announcement welcomed by small shippers of such cargo. Vegetable oil and liquid sugar were to have been northbound loads. Naturally, the railroads protested the decision to

permit this bulk carriage. In any case, it is questionable that these tanks were ever used for revenue cargoes. In an interview with the author, Capt. Dennis P. Schroeder, onetime Master of *Seatrain Texas*, reported that the tanks were used only for fuel oil or ballast.

The postwar period also saw Seatrain metamorphose into a strictly domestic carrier by pulling out of Havana. Cuban labor—with the government's support—had insisted that Seatrain unload cargo from American freight cars into Cuban equipment, essentially creating a "make-work" situation. Since this would have negated a major cost advantage of Seatrain's handling system,

BETWEEN NEW YORK AND SAVANNAH

PORTS OF CALL	Seatrain Savannah Voy. 62	Seatrain New York Voy. 383	Seatrain New York Voy. 384	Seatrain Savannah Voy. 62	Seatrain Savannah Voy. 63	Seatrain New York Voy. 384	Seatrain New Jersey Voy. 228	Seatrain Savannah Voy. 63
NEW YORK ----Lv.	Saturday June 13	—	Saturday June 20	—	Saturday June 27	—	Thursday July 2	—
SAVANNAH ----Ar.	Monday June 15	—	Monday June 22	—	Monday June 29	—	Saturday July 4	—
SAVANNAH ----Lv.	—	Tuesday June 16	—	Tuesday June 23	—	Tuesday June 30	—	Tuesday July 7
NEW YORK ----Ar.	—	Friday June 19	—	Friday June 26	—	Friday July 3	—	Friday July 10

BETWEEN NEW YORK AND NEW ORLEANS

PORTS OF CALL	Seatrain Savannah Voy. 62	Seatrain New York Voy. 384	Seatrain Savannah Voy. 63	Seatrain New Jersey Voy. 228
NEW YORK ----Lv.	Saturday June 13	Saturday June 20	Saturday June 27	Thursday July 2
NEW ORLEANS--Ar.	Friday June 19	Friday June 26	Friday July 3	Wednesday July 8
NEW ORLEANS--Lv.	Saturday June 20	Saturday June 27	Saturday July 4	Thursday July 9
NEW YORK ----Ar.	Friday June 26	Friday July 3	Friday July 10	Wednesday July 15

BETWEEN NEW YORK AND TEXAS CITY

PORTS OF CALL	Seatrain Texas Voy. 204	Seatrain Georgia Voy. 46	Seatrain Louisiana Voy. 42	Seatrain New Jersey Voy. 227	Seatrain Texas Voy. 205	Seatrain Georgia Voy. 47	Seatrain Louisiana Voy. 43	
NEW YORK ----Lv.	Tuesday June 9	Thursday June 11	Tuesday June 16	Thursday June 18	Tuesday June 23	Thursday June 25	Tuesday June 30	Thursday July 2
TEXAS CITY---Ar.	Monday June 15	Wednesday June 17	Monday June 22	Wednesday June 24	Monday June 29	Wednesday July 1	Monday July 6	NO SAILING SEE NOTE
TEXAS CITY---Lv.	Tuesday June 16	Thursday June 18	Tuesday June 23	Thursday June 25	Tuesday June 30	Thursday July 2	Tuesday July 7	
NEW YORK ----Ar.	Monday June 22	Wednesday June 24	Monday June 29	Wednesday July 1	Monday July 6	Wednesday July 8	Monday July 13	

Robert E. Mohowski collection

The sailing schedule for June 1953 indicated that ships would sail New York–Savannah–New Orleans or New York–Texas City. At this time, Seatrain was purely a domestic freight car carrier; Cuba service had ended by 1951, while the Puerto Rico runs would start in 1963.

the company declined to operate under such terms. It apparently did resume Havana service after the war, albeit sporadically, before quitting Cuba for good in 1951. Thus, Seatrain's exit from Cuba was due to continued labor issues at the Havana docks early in the post-war era, not the 1960 communist revolution as is generally believed.

OUT OF HAVANA, INTO SAVANNAH

Fortunately for Seatrain Lines, the loss of the Havana service coincided with the Central of Georgia Railway's 1951 purchase of the Savannah & Atlanta Railway. This gave CofG direct access to the Savannah waterfront, and the road established a connection with Seatrain. Service began that same year, and *Seatrains Havana* was renamed *Seatrains Savannah*. The company had earlier planned to merge with or purchase the Ocean Steamship Co., which had rights into Savannah and was owned by

CofG but had not operated since the war. Seeking to maintain coastal shipping service to the Georgia port, a long list of interested parties, including 83 shippers, the state port authority, and the governor, supported Seatrain's bid.

With the Savannah announcement, the company ran into the most vehement rail opposition it had faced thus far. Railroads serving the South and Southeast protested the loudest. Before World War II, some 400 cargo ships were employed in coastal service. During the war, many were diverted to overseas service, requiring shippers to switch to rail and truck. Having secured these markets, railroads were determined to hold and expand them. By 1950, only 100 ships had returned to coastal routes. Seatrain's operations were a clear threat of revival, but there was strong political support for the company. Also, the wartime role of Seatrain's ships was seen as a reason to keep them active for

Seatrains saltwater rail routes



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CLASSIC TRAINS, Bill Metzger

An "all-time" map of Seatrain rail car routes shows service to 6 ports (4 U.S., 2 foreign).

national security reasons.

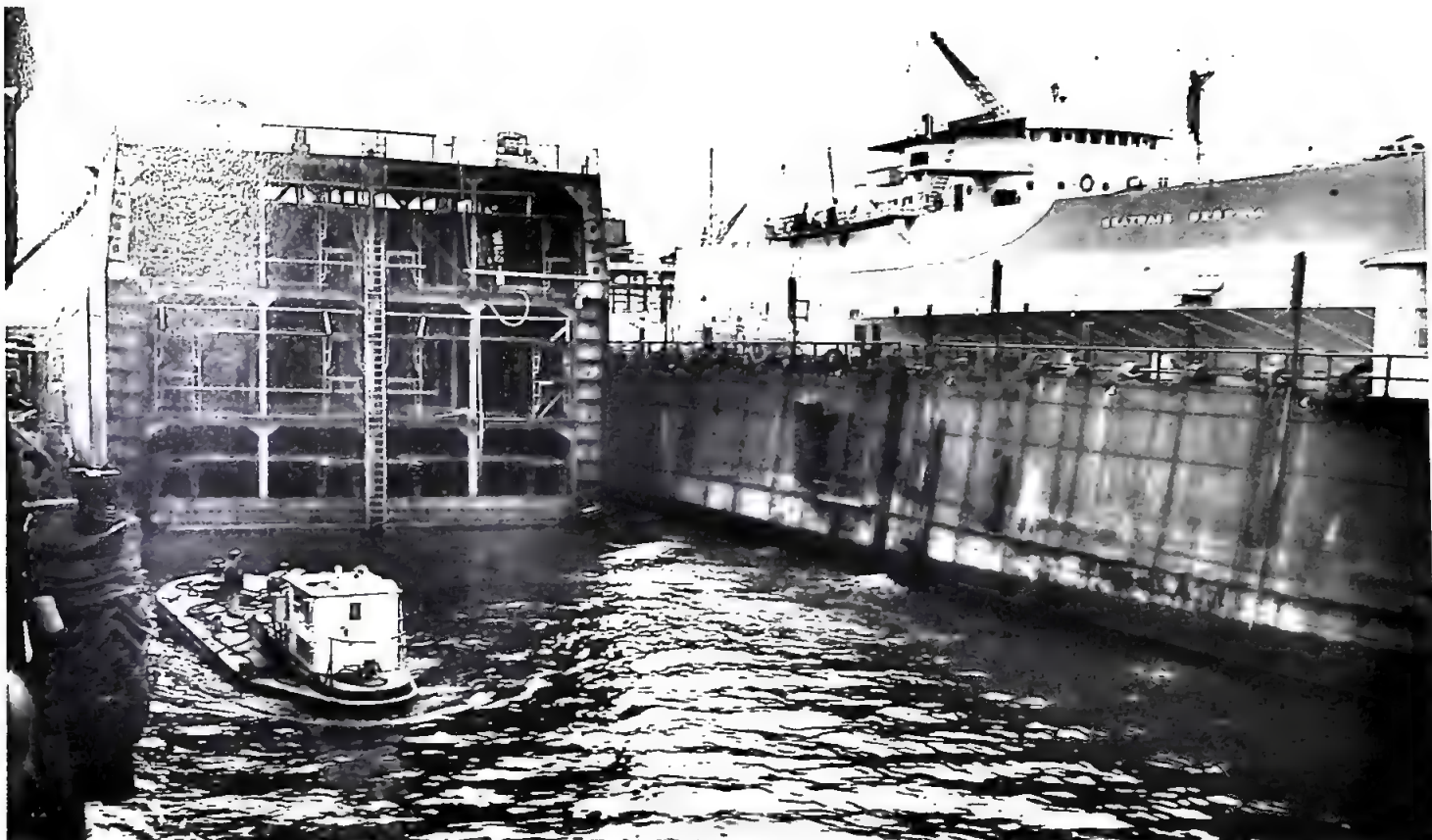
Seatrains received in November 1951 a six-month authority to conduct the Savannah service. The company and its supporters repeatedly expressed the concern that it was essential for U.S.-flag steamship service along the eastern seaboard to remain, in order to provide an alternative to rail service. There was no question that the lower steamship rates made it possible for marginal manufacturers and suppliers to enter markets where rail rates would have been prohibitive. The railroads, however, continued to throw stumbling blocks in Seatrain's way, despite favorable rulings from the ICC, which eventually granted permanent authority for the service.

As would be expected, Seatrain was drawing most of its business from the metropolitan New York industrial region, the mid-Atlantic states, and New England. To a lesser extent, Louisiana, Texas, and Georgia businesses also found the service useful. The near Midwest states and those bordering the three southern states made use of Seatrain to a further limited degree. Bulk freight at this time included sulphur, resin, rice, lumber, iron and steel, oil, and chemicals. Oversize loads (which would have occupied the weather deck) included boats, bulk and liquid storage tanks, and even a cyclotron.

TOWARD TRUE CONTAINERIZATION

The company still appeared optimistic about the business as it ordered two new ships from Sun Shipbuilding in 1951. Named *Seatrains Georgia* and *Seatrains Louisiana*, these would be the last ships built for the company patterned after the original *Seatrains* of 1928. This brought the fleet to seven ships, but not for long. In 1954, the company sold the 1928 ship to West India Fruit & Steamship Co., which renamed it *Sea Level*.

In 1958 Seatrain Lines announced a



Hagley Museum & Library collection

The hull configuration of the Seatrain ships—three decks, each with four tracks (plus four tracks on the top deck)—is evident in this view of *Seatrain Georgia* being lengthened at Sun Shipbuilding in 1963. The vessel has been cut in two for installation of a new midsection.

new service called Seamobile. In a newspaper interview, the company's vice president said that, "for the first time shippers can combine the economy of water transportation with the flexibility of door-to-door pick up and delivery in containers." It was a step toward true container technology.

Further change occurred in 1959. Seatrain stockholders were not pleased with the company's financial performance. A proxy battle ensued that resulted in Graham Brush, Seatrain's founder and president, being forced out. John Weller, a former New Haven Railroad executive, became president. There was also an unsuccessful purchase offer in 1959 from the innovative entrepreneur Malcom McLean, already well on his way to establishing a highly successful and revolutionary container service. He had hoped to merge with or acquire Seatrain for the intermodal steamship operation that was to become Sea-Land.

Seatrain's core business of moving rail cars by sea in coastal and Gulf service was under attack on several fronts. Freight cars were becoming larger and heavier. Mergers were about to take in railroads that had been Seatrain supporters. Central of Georgia, for example, would become a Southern Railway

subsidiary in 1963, whereupon it immediately ended its affiliation with Seatrain. Container shipping and handling technology was steadily advancing and offered all of Seatrain's advantages with even greater flexibility. The railroads continued their relentless effort to scuttle the company and coastal shipping in general. In 1958 Weller noted, "The railroads are taking time out from their own economic troubles for a campaign to polish off coastal shipping lines." They were soon to achieve that goal.

Despite continued reminders to the ICC that selective rate-cutting by railroads would mean the end of the remaining ocean service to Savannah, and despite the lowered labor costs that had come with reducing ships' crews, the Savannah runs ended in May 1963. Pulp board and fiberboard accounted for more than 50 percent of the company's business out of the Georgia port, but this traffic declined as railroads cut their rates for those commodities. Georgia authorities requested that Seatrain continue the service at a loss while they appealed to the ICC, and shippers attempted to find additional cargoes, but the efforts were in vain.

To attract container traffic, Seatrain ordered 100 new boxes and installed a new crane at Edgewater to handle such

shipments. At a cost of \$1.6 million, *Seatrain Georgia* and *Seatrain Louisiana* were lengthened, boosting their capacity by 25 percent to 125 rail cars or 250 containers. The enlargement of the two newest and fastest ships in the fleet reflected the increasing demand for container service as well as a planned new route, to San Juan, Puerto Rico.

The island nation had no railroads, so Seatrain initially intended to carry only truck trailers and containers, including the company's Seamobile units, NYC Flexi-Vans, and FGEX refrigerator trailers. As with the original service to Cuba, the railroads were supportive of the Puerto Rico run, seeing it as a way to reach an otherwise inaccessible market, so freight cars were added to the cargo mix. Cars would be carried to San Juan by ship, set down on dockside tracks, and unloaded, with their contents transferred to trucks for onward movement. The service would be weekly, beginning May 15, 1963, virtually the same time the Savannah runs ended.

While the new offshore service was a positive move for Seatrain, the troubles of the coastal service continued. President Weller again derogated the ICC as being "disinclined to enforce the provisions of the law prohibiting discrimination in rail rates against coastwise



Allan Roberts

Looking well-worn after 35 years of service, *Seatrain New York* is in her namesake harbor in April 1967. The container revolution is well under way, as evidenced by her load of 40-foot boxes, most of which bear Seatrain's final logo of two arrows intertwined to form an "S."



Mike Palmieri

The car loader at Belle Chasse (New Orleans), La., survived, in derelict condition, until the early 2000s. In this 1986 photo, its loading arms are retracted and some of the trestlework is gone.

water carriers." He added, "In recent months particularly, the commission majority almost seems to be embarked on a deliberate campaign to bring about the end of coastwise service." As a result, he announced the company would pull out of New Orleans in June 1964, 35 years after that port had seen the innovative service begin with runs to Havana. Other big changes came quickly.

CHANGING TIMES

In May 1965, Transeastern Associates, Inc., acquired Seatrain Lines in an \$8.5 million deal. Led by Joseph Kahn and Howard Pack, Transeastern was engaged in various ocean shipping ventures, including charters to the Military Sea Transportation Service. MSTS was

created in 1949 to provide the U.S. military with sea transport for personnel and supplies and was providing ever more work for America's merchant marine. Kahn and Pack were proponents of container service.

The railroads' campaign against Seatrain, plus other factors, had eroded its business to the point that, in terms of domestic service, only New York-Texas City remained. Beyond that, the movement of entire railroad cars was losing favor to containers. The new owners recognized that Seatrain was exhausting Graham Brush's 1928 technology, and they were seeking new ways forward. In May 1966, with the expanding war in Vietnam demanding increased transport services to Southeast Asia,

Transeastern announced that Seatrain had been awarded an \$11 million government contract for use of its ships with "multipurpose cargo systems" in military transport. The first Seatrain vessels to enter this service were *Seatrain Texas*, *New Jersey*, and *Savannah*. They were part of an armada of cargo ships engaged in Vietnam-related work that in 1967 numbered more than 500, representing 40 percent of the nation's merchant marine capacity.

The company was also to take delivery of eight additional, larger ships that had been converted from World War II-era tankers. All carried the *Seatrain* prefix. Replacing the three ships initially assigned to Vietnam service were the new *Seatrain Puerto Rico*, *Seatrain Carolina*, and *Seatrain Maryland*. They could accommodate 177 40-foot containers and 36 freight cars. However, rail cars amounted to at most a small percentage of the cargo carried, and it's possible that some of the ships never carried freight cars at all.

In September 1966 came an announcement that Seatrain would take over its parent, Transeastern Associates, and move from coastal U.S. and Caribbean operations into worldwide service. In November '66 the company announced additional contracts with MSTS for nine more of its ships, for a total of a dozen vessels so employed. At the same time, Seatrain announced that the Texas City rail car service would be "temporarily discontinued." No doubt the MSTS contracts seemed more of a sure thing than continuing

the sinking of problematic Gulf Coast service.

Contributing to the decline of the Texas City traffic were the railroads, which employed the same strategy there that they had used in cutting Seatrain out of Savannah and New Orleans. Much of the outbound traffic from Texas City came from Monsanto Chemical Co., and railroads serving the region were cutting rates to draw Monsanto's business to themselves. Seatrain's new managers saw little future in continuing the contest with the railroads when government overseas traffic was more lucrative and easier to obtain and retain. With its increasing focus on military transport, Seatrain would eventually also let its East Coast container traffic go to Sea-Land.

The end of the Texas City runs in October 1966 greatly reduced rail activity at Edgewater. The Susquehanna claimed a loss of 850 carloads per month, which represented approximately 25 percent of its gross monthly income. As a result, the railroad brought suit against Seatrain, asking for \$4.8 million in damages plus interest and costs. The twice-weekly Puerto Rico service remained, however, and the parties reached an agreement. For the Susquehanna, half a loaf was better than none. Soon, however, even the half loaf would disappear.

NO MORE TRAINS FOR SEATRIN

By the late '60s, container-only competitor Sea-Land had the lion's share of U.S.-Puerto Rico business. Since the island did not have a rail system, Seatrain's specialty of shipping freight cars was a drawback, whereas containers could offer door-to-door service.

Capt. Dennis P. Schroeder, now a professor of maritime transportation at the State University of New York Maritime College, was serving aboard the *Seatrain New York* on the San Juan run when she became the last of the company's ships to carry rail cars in revenue service, in January 1970. By that time, he reports, cars were handled only on the upper two decks, with containers stowed below. Soon afterwards, the ship was laid up at Edgewater because of leaking fuel tanks and mechanical problems. Around mid-year, under Schroeder's command, *Seatrain Texas* brought the locomotives and rail cars the company had used at San Juan, as well as the dock crane itself, to Edgewater. A year later, the *Texas* would also go into lay-up and eventual scrapping, despite efforts by Schroeder and others to have her preserved as a memorial for the valiant service she and all the Sea-



Two photos, GC Railway

SAILING IN SEATRIN'S WAKE

Every three or four days along Alabama's Gulf Coast, an unusual ship sails out of Mobile Bay on a southwesterly course for Mexico. The vessel's width-to-length ratio, blunt bow, and boxy lines make her less graceful than most saltwater freighters of years past. As the ship passes and the flat, open stern comes into view, her purpose becomes evident. The ends of freight cars clamped to 15 tracks on two decks identifies this ship as one of two seagoing rail car ferries operated by CG Railway.

Bali Sea and *Banda Sea* are 575-foot-long, 118-foot-wide sister ships, each capable of carrying up to 113 railroad cars. They operate across the Gulf of Mexico on a scheduled service between Mobile, Ala., and Coatzacoalcos, Mexico. Loaded and unloaded from the stern, the vessels of CG Railway, a subsidiary of International Shiphoulding Corp. established in 2000, emulate the Great Lakes carferries of decades past. But the fact that they operate in salt water, have multiple decks, and cross open seas brings them closer to the ships and operations created by Graham Brush and his Seatrain Lines of 80 years ago.—R.E.M.



train crews performed during wartime.

During the 1970s, the company acquired more ships for container service and global operations. This was a heady time for the U.S. maritime industry; business was booming and government operating subsidies and funds for ship construction were easily available. Seatrain announced a two-year, \$100 million plan "to put the steamship company solidly into the container shipping field." This included a new container terminal at Weehawken (on former Erie Railroad property), and similar terminals on the Gulf and West coasts. More surplus tankers were to be converted into containerships, and a "mini" land-bridge service (containers on ship across the Pacific, then via rail to U.S. destinations) was to be established. In the early '70s, Seatrain even established

its own shipbuilding yard in the former Brooklyn Navy Yard. However, cost overruns in the yard, labor issues, overbuilding by the shipping industry, and other problems would bring the company to bankruptcy in 1981. Liquidation came the following year.

Graham Brush's Seatrain Lines was a fascinating combination of railroad and steamship technology, not only in its hardware but also in its amorphous nature as a transportation company. Its 40-year use of freight cars as "sea containers" was a motivational force in the development of boxes that were easier to transfer from one transportation mode to another. Those containers in turn led back to railroads and to the creation of double-stack trains, one of the rail industry's most successful and profitable sources of income today. ■

A half century of difference at Dominguez Junction

Will comparative Pacific Electric photos inspire younger fans to approach today's railroading in a similar fashion?

By Richard Francaviglia

As a teenager in Los Angeles a half century ago, I became quite interested in the once-great Pacific Electric Railway. In fact, I'd nearly worn out my copy of the late Donald Duke's beautifully illustrated 1958 book *Pacific Electric Railway: A Pictorial Album of Electric Railroading*. Although the book had many photos taken from the 1920s into the 1950s, I was especially drawn to images of wooden cars in the early 1900s. One crisp image of a Long Beach Flyer at Dominguez Tower taken about 1910 was so evocative that it captivated me. Framed by the interlocking tower and Southern Pacific's Harbor Branch crossing, the photo was beautifully composed, emphasizing the open countryside and the straight, race-track quality of the Long Beach line.

Appropriately, the 50-year-old photo featured a single PE car in the distance, frozen in time by the photographer. (Data suggest the car, 363, was stopping for a lone passenger.) I could almost hear the car's reedy, clarinet-like whistle, and I could almost smell the ozone of sparks flashing from the point where the car's trolley pole touched the 600-volt overhead line. In 1910, the photographer used black-and-white film, but I could easily envision the dark wine red color of the interurban car under a hazy blue sky.

In 1960, exactly 50 years after the 1910 picture was made, a friend and I rode a PE "Big Red Car" from downtown Los Angeles to Dominguez Junction. Although I did not have my Duke book with me, I remembered the 1910

photo in it and was pleased that the tower still stood, albeit repainted. The small passenger shelter and the large electric substation north of the junction also still stood, and I was glad I had my Kodak Brownie 620 camera along. Our plan was to photograph remnants of the PE empire, but cost prohibited us from shooting many color photos. Thus on this visit, I had black-and-white film in my camera. By coincidence, I was standing just south of the tower when I heard a hollow hooting sound—the familiar whistle of a southbound Big Red Car in the distance.

As I comprehended the scene, I realized I was close to the spot where the photographer had stood when he snapped that southbound Long Beach Flyer a half century earlier. This gave me an idea—use the last frame on my roll to duplicate the old picture. With just seconds to act, and relying solely on memory, I moved into what I recalled as his 1910 position and snapped my own photo. After clicking the shutter, I savored the car's passage, its motors grinding and the overhead wire snapping and pinging with the sound and scent of occasional sparks.

Several days later, I picked up my developed photos at the pharmacy. I eagerly opened the pack of snapshots to see just how closely I had come to capturing—or rather, re-capturing—the scene. The picture looked good, and after I got home I placed it side by side with its counterpart in Duke's book. Comparing the photos, I was amazed to see that I'd placed myself at virtually

the same location where the photographer had set up 50 years earlier! I had, however, waited a few seconds too long to click the shutter in relation to where the car was in 1910; the viewfinder on my Brownie 620 made trains look farther away than they were.

That difference aside, though, the pictures confirm that Dominguez Junction, after half a century, remained an interurban railfan's paradise. This foray turned out to be the first of many "then-and-now" photographic comparisons I would make over the ensuing decades as a professional historian.

I have not been back to Dominguez Junction since I made that picture, but I know that the 1990 Blue Line light-rail route from Los Angeles to Long Beach, which in general follows the PE path, was elevated there to avoid crossing the SP (now Union Pacific) at grade. Perhaps the current transit line will inspire some young people of today to develop a lifelong interest in electric railroading, and record what they see today for historians in 2060. ■

More on our website

Learn more about the Pacific Electric, and watch video clips of its Red Cars in action, at www.ClassicTrainsMag.com



Top, Charles Lawrence, from the Jack Finn collection, courtesy Pacific Electric Railway Historical Society (perhys.org); above, Richard Francaviglia

With only seconds to act, the author in 1960 virtually replicated the Dominguez Tower photo circa 1910 he remembered from a 1958 PE book.

Workin' on the Railroad





Santa Fe Railway

Keeping cool— a must in the streamliner age

In the days of steam locomotives and heavyweight cars, air-conditioning became a luxury for passengers, gradually bringing to an end their paying to ride in drafty, dirty, soot-covered cars that could be too hot in summer and not warm enough in winter. When the streamliner age dawned, keeping cool in the "a.c." became a given. But the units, mounted underneath the cars, were still a "dirt magnet." Hence this scene in the Los Angeles yard of the railroad that arguably faced the longest, driest, dirtiest runs: Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe. The caption on the back of the publicity glossy said it all: "This service of cleaning an air-conditioning sump unit is required at the completion of each trip between Los Angeles and Chicago in order to provide clean, pure air for the cars' interior and add to the comfort of the traveling public."

A trip on the Erie

Boyhood rides to Greenwood Lake could involve motor cars or steam trains



During the 1930s as I was growing up, my father worked for the Erie Railroad as a machinist. One of the perks of his railroad employment was the family passenger-train pass. In the summer we would use the pass for trips to Greenwood Lake on the New Jersey–New York state line. This was reached by an Erie branch line once known as the New York & Greenwood Lake Railway. We would ride to the end of the line, Sterling Forest, just inside New York state. At the lake we would enjoy a day of swimming, fishing, and relief from the Jersey City heat.

Mother would pack a picnic lunch and off we would go. First was a bus ride from the Greenville section of Jersey City to Journal Square, where we would take the Hudson & Manhattan tubes to the Erie station stop at Pavonia Avenue. On the H&M, I would always ask that we ride in the first car so I could stand at the front window. As we left Journal Square station, we would

be on ground level for about a mile, then the train would dive underground for the rest of the trip. In the tunnel it seemed like we were going 100 mph.

Once off the H&M, we would go up one flight of stairs to a tunnel that led to the Erie's Jersey City terminal. After about a quarter of a mile, the tunnel opened up to the terminal's concourse and waiting room, where there were trainboards and stairs up to each of the 12 platforms. We made our way to the Greenwood Lake train, which usually consisted of a gas-electric passenger-baggage "doodlebug" towing a Stillwell coach, or a steam engine (a K-class light Pacific or a G-class Ten-Wheeler) with a baggage car and a coach.

Leaving the station, to the left was a lineup of mainly Pacific locomotives on the ready track, and behind that was the roundhouse in which Dad worked. Then it was up the great steel viaduct to the "Bergen Arches," a deep rock cut with several short tunnels through the

Palisades, and out onto the meadows. After the train passed through the north end of Newark and the Montclairs, the countryside became more and more rural. By the time we got to Greenwood Lake, 43.5 miles and a couple of hours from Jersey City, it was all woods and mountains. The facilities there consisted of the station, an ice house, a boat dock, a hotel, and a turntable, all set at the foot of a mountain alongside the lake.

What a great experience for a young boy, sitting at the open window, absorbing the sights, sounds, and smells. Of course, thirsty or not, I had to make several trips to the end of the coach to have a drink of ice water. The paper cups came out of the dispenser as little white triangles that had to be unfolded to make cone-shaped cups.

At the time, ice was still cut out of the lake and stored in the ice house until it was shipped to the New York area. The dock was used by passengers



Erie Railroad

Two westbound trains, a doodlebug with a Stillwell coach and a Pacific with four Stillwells, climb the viaduct out of Jersey City before entering the "Bergen Arches" rock cut.

crossing the lake to the west shore, were there was a colony of homes. They rode in a motor launch that held about eight people. The hotel was a two-story house with a large porch, part of which was screened in and populated by several canaries.

After we arrived, Dad would help the train crew turn the locomotive on the "Armstrong" (muscle-powered) turntable. The doodlebugs were too long for the turntable and had to back down the line to turn on a wye at, I believe, Ringwood Junction, 9 miles south.

In addition to eating, fishing, and swimming at the lake, we took time to go into the ice house. What a change from the brilliant sunlight of a hot day to the dark cool interior. It took a few minutes for your eyes to adjust to the



Kent Day Coes

Train 507 pulls out of Great Notch, N.J., in the early 1940s, after the old NY&GL had been cut back to Midvale. Subbing for the normally assigned doodlebug is Pacific 2552 and two cars.



D. R. Connor

Erie doodlebug 5014 (Electro-Motive, 1931) and a Stillwell coach are about 5 minutes into their Midvale-Jersey City run as train 530 as they pass Pompton Junction on August 11, 1946.

dim light inside the building.

All this has changed during the last 70-plus years. The Hudson & Manhattan is now the Port Authority Trans-Hudson (PATH). The Erie Railroad terminal in Jersey City has vanished without a trace, replaced by a group of high-rise buildings and a huge shopping mall. The viaduct is gone, and the Bergen Arches are overgrown. Mechan-

ical refrigeration has ended the use of ice houses. Railroad tracks no longer reach Greenwood Lake, which is encircled by a road. Other parts of the NY&GL are abandoned, submerged under a reservoir, or in use by New Jersey Transit's Montclair-Boonton Line commuter trains.

It has all changed, but I still have my memories.—R. F. Kruthers

A doubleheader to dance about

Two of the Southern's green-and-gold Ps-4 Pacifics made a glorious sight

My father, I. W. King, grew up in Greenville, S.C., where his father, I. E. King, was a telegraph operator for the Southern Railway. Like most railroad families, they often used the employee pass to visit relatives. Many of Dad's people lived down toward the Georgia state line. The trains the family rode were pulled by steam locomotives, and in that part of the South on the lines of the Southern Railway, a proper passenger engine was trimmed out in green and gold.

One crisp morning, Dad was at the depot in Westminster, S.C., where an uncle was the station agent. Dad was not alone at the platform. In those days, passing steam trains were the best entertainment a small southern town had to offer, so several folks were on hand to monitor the comings and goings on Southern's Washington-Atlanta main line. It was the culture of the times.

He wasn't there long when off to the south a whistle announced a train was coming. The melodious tones of the steamboat whistle told that the train was powered by one of the road's beautiful class Ps-4 Pacifics. The whistle gained volume at each successive crossing. Soon, around the gentle curve, not one but two magnificent Ps-4's came parading into view—a doubleheader.

Strung out behind the locomotives was a long string of dark green cars. The morning sunlight was dancing on those two highly polished engines, and Dad said it was simply a sight to behold.

On toward the station came this vision. Leaning way out from the cabs, the two engineers could be seen looking hard at the platform ahead. Westminster was but a flag stop for this train, and the hoggers were wanting to know, as soon as possible, "Are we to stop, or run on through?"

In short order the assessment was made: There was no work in Westminster that morning. Immediately both heads ducked back inside. Two rapid whistle blasts from the lead engine, and out came two throttles like they'd been linked together. Above the train, the sky



I. W. King, Joel King collection

Glory! Two Southern Ps-4's depart Charlottesville, Va., with an Atlanta-bound train in 1951.

became filled with rolling gray smoke.

Now the roar of the exhausts took command of the scene. The platform started to shake. Audible senses battled, then dominated, visual ones. Dad said it was simply as good as it gets.

About that time, down the platform toward the approaching train, Dad noticed a little black man sitting atop a baggage cart, taking in the spectacle as well. Poor fella, it just became too much for him. Off the cart he jumped. Up on his toes he danced as his hat flew in the air. He was yelling something like "Glory!" but Dad said he couldn't really tell. Those Ps-4's were beside him now, drowning out everything as they blasted north.

Dad said he knew exactly how the man felt.

Then years later, when all those lovely engines had long since fulfilled their last assignment, Dad did his best to make them come alive again for one more evening. By now he had three small boys of his own. It was summer in the late 1950s, and we were visiting grandparents in Greenville.

At dinner he announced that later on there would be some special visitors to the house. About 7 that evening, up to 212 West Earle Street rolled an automobile and out stepped two stately looking gentlemen near my grandfather's age. We boys were soon introduced to Mr.

Fant and Mr. Ambrose, both retired Southern steam engineers.

They were directed to white cane rocking chairs on the covered side porch and, in short order, Dad was gently prodding them for stories. Needless to say, that night three young lads were totally enthralled at the feet of those two steam giants—engineers who had run opposite each other on the best trains on the Southern Railway, Nos. 37 and 38, the *Crescent Limited*.

That evening surpassed any cab ride ever taken. The men told stories of making up time, derailments, being held up at gunpoint, special runs, stormy weather, bad track, and on and on. Why, the way they told the stories, it felt like you were right in the cabs of those green and gold engines with them.

It was heady stuff, but I do recall becoming a bit mystified as to why I was somehow born much too late to experience this heyday of steam railroading. Would *all* my understanding of main-line steam be secondhand?

Thankfully this hasn't been the case, as I have enjoyed lots of restored steam and am thankful for the dedicated efforts of the people who made possible these later memories. Nonetheless, it would have been simply fantastic to be on the platform with Dad as those doubleheaded Ps-4's came storming through Westminster.—Joel P. King

BL2's and Pullmans to the Stock Yards

A Rock Island stock train gets "lost" in Chicago

Reading Robert A. Janz's excellent Chicago & North Western tale of Windy City railroading, "Working the Stock Yards Transfer" [Summer 2010 CLASSIC TRAINS], called to mind an experience I had when I was a trainee for the Rock Island in November 1956 out of the railroad's namesake Illinois city.

A special movement known as "the fat stock special," which originated in western Iowa, was coming at us, destined for the Union Stock Yards in Chicago. The train consisted of about 25 stock cars, two Pullmans for the stockmen, and a baggage-coach combine as a rider for the carmen. No setouts for hotboxes were tolerated, so carmen with journal jacks, brasses, and repacks accompanied the train.

The stock special arrived in Rock Island after midnight, powered by a "symmetrical" consist of two BL2's spliced by an F7B. The three passenger cars were right behind the diesels. Riding trains was part of my training assignment, and Lou Lonnegren, a respected Rock Island Division road foreman, had invited me to ride along.

The BL2 cab was cramped. The head brakeman rode the trailing unit while Lou and I stood in the front cab. That unit was having problems making forward transition automatically, so its relay had to be manually closed. The relay was inconveniently located in the lower part of the electrical cabinet, which required Lou and me to remove the cab floorboard in order to access and close the relay when required. Although the night was foggy, we were in cab-signal territory so we had continuous signal indications.

Once into Blue Island, the suburb where RI's main Chicago-area yard was located, we changed crews. Lou got off too and left me "in charge" (which was

a stretch of the term as applied to a green kid like me). An extra yard crew handled the movement to the stock yards. We proceeded east to Englewood, where we crossed the Pennsylvania Railroad main line. After a 2-mile run on joint RI-New York Central trackage to Root Street Tower, we diverged onto the Chicago Junction Railway and headed west to the stock yards.

A CJ switchtender lined us into the unloading-chute tracks. The head brakeman was a new man and unfamiliar with the stockyard trackage. Since we had the three passenger cars up front, we could not simply cut away from our train at the end of the chute tracks. We continued along until I remarked that I thought we were on another railroad. The engineer agreed and stopped. At the risk of being "time-slipped," I agreed to get on the ground and pass signals. I got the head brakeman in view and we shoved back and spotted the stock cars at the chutes.

We then set the Pullmans onto a spur, and it was here where the head brakeman's lack of experience showed. While disconnecting the steam-heat lines, he carelessly had his foot under the connections such that when they were separated he got a foot bath of very hot water. The poor guy could not get his shoe off fast enough!

I then lined us back to our caboose, where the head brakeman began nursing his scalded foot. We picked up our caboose and returned to Englewood, where I got off and caught a streetcar downtown to La Salle Street Station. The next train I could ride back to Rock Island was No. 3, the *Golden State Limited*. My pass wasn't good on that train, but by talking to the head-end crew, I was able to ride the trailing E unit back to Rock Island.—Ben F. Anthony

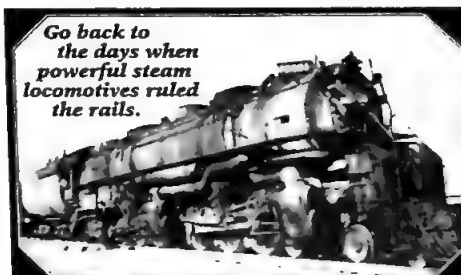
**The head brakeman
was a new man and
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No support group

A young fan in the South had to teach himself about rail photography



Ron Flanary

While not technically perfect, this photo of L&N C628's under the sanding gantry at Corbin, Ky., remains a treasured link to an earlier time.

As a young railfan growing up in central Appalachia in the late 1950s and early '60s, my only link to fellow enthusiasts was through the pulp pages of *Railroad* magazine, or the slicker, more sophisticated *TRAINS*. A local National Railway Historical Society chapter existed 45 miles south in Kingsport, Tenn., but given my limited travel range, it might as well have been 500 miles away.

A central element of the hobby was, and still is, photography—but neither of these publications addressed the mysteries of *f*-stops, shutter speeds, ASA ratings, depth of field, or exposure tables for the neophyte. It was apparently assumed that most young photographers would have access to support groups of older and more knowledgeable members of the fraternity to teach them these fundamentals. But in Appalachia, and the South in general, finding other railfan photographers was as rare as albino rats in the local garbage dump.

Today photographic equipment has

advanced to the point that one doesn't have to understand much about the technical points. Just compose, point, and click, and the odds are you'll get an acceptable image. The need for a support network isn't as critical given the ready availability of such technology.

My photographic evolution began with a Kodak Brownie box camera in the late '50s. This progressed through a smaller plastic Brownie with a fixed lens and shutter speed—which was very slow. At last I realized 35mm was the format of choice, although my first such camera was a semi-automatic viewfinder Argus model (an "Autronic") that was more of a consumer model than a "real" single-lens reflex 35mm. Also, teenaged finances being what they were, I had limited funds for film. I had to make every frame count, and I considered every shot before I pressed the shutter.

I rarely shot color film, because it was more expensive than black-and-white. An exception came in 1961 when

I mistakenly purchased a roll of transparency film. The slides that I picked up at Mack's drugstore in my hometown were a total mystery. What good were these things? I had no projector, but at least I kept the dozen or so slides in hopes that one day I might be able to project them and see the results.

Typical of these times was an evening in Corbin, Ky., in summer 1965. I spent the afternoon stalking motive power and trains in the Louisville & Nashville yard while I waited to catch northbound train 18 to Cincinnati, due out at 3:25 a.m. After attempting a time exposure of southbound counterpart 17 near midnight, it dawned on me that I still had three and a half hours to kill, so I drove back to the engine terminal with my Argus in hopes of figuring out the mysteries of nighttime photography.

While I was trying to steady my camera on an old oil drum, using a scrap of wood I found as an additional brace, an employee approached me. I

figured I was about to get tossed off the property, since a teenage boy stumbling around in the darkness of a busy engine terminal at 1 a.m. was not encouraged. He turned out to be the third-trick roundhouse foreman, and instead of giving me the heave-ho, he took me on a tour of the engine shop—and advised me to “be very careful.”

In all my young years of train photography in my home region, I rarely saw another person with a camera around the tracks. Eventually I did meet a couple of friends from a neighboring town who shared my passion for trains, but we were of no help to each other when it came to photography. Like me, they were learning by trial and error. Eventually, of course, the experience gained from my mistakes improved the end result, but precious opportunities were squandered, since that process took years. A succession of bet-

ter equipment and film, and eventually the transition into digital, would improve my photos. I still have frustration in viewing my older grainy images of memorable locomotives and scenes, knowing a better camera, color transparency film, and a fuller understanding of how it all worked would have likely produced superior images.

On the other hand, the accompanying grainy black-and-white photo of the three Alco C628's under the sanding gantry at Corbin in 1965 succeeds in taking me back in time to those days of learning photography without a support network. A tripod and a higher f-stop to improve the depth of field would have been better. But those Alcos, the sanding gantry, and even the L&N itself all have been extinct, of course, for many years, so this shot exemplifies that something is better than nothing.—Ron Flanary

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1. Publication title: CLASSIC TRAINS • 2. Publication No.: 019-302 • 3. Filing date: October 1, 2010 • 4. Issue frequency: Quarterly • 5. Number of issues published annually: 4 • 6. Annual subscription price: \$23.50 • 7. Complete mailing address of known office of publication: 21027 Crossroads Circle, Waukegan, WI 53186; telephone: (781) 798-6814 • 8. Complete mailing address of general business office of publisher: same • 9. Publisher: Kevin P. Keefe, 21027 Crossroads Circle, Waukegan, WI 53186; Editor: Robert S. McGonigal, same • 10. Owner: Kalmbach Publishing Co., same; stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of stock are: Gerald & Patricia Boettcher Living Trust, 8241 Warren Ave., Wauwatosa, WI 53213; William & Mary Calhoun Jr., 704 Highland Place Rd., Fort Collins, CO 80524; Metairie Duval, 8442 Brandon Dr., Granite Bay, CA 95746; Harold Edmonson, 6021 N. Marmon Ave., Chicago, IL 60644; Laura & Gregory Felzer, 4114 Savoy Pl., St. Louis, MO 63104; Michael J. McWhorter, 10 McWhorter, WI 53022; Susan E. Fisher Revocable Trust, c/o Sandra Pat Lusk, P.O. Box 17055, Tucson, AZ 85731; George A. Giff, c/o Ted and Lois Stuart, 1329 Phipps Cottage Court #1, Charlottesville, VA 22911; Bruce H. Grunden, 255 Vista Del Lago Dr., Nuttman, TX 77336; Linda H. Hanson, 3636 Bateman Circle S., Barrington Hills, IL 60010; George F. Hirschman Trust, 3636 Bateman Circle S., Barrington Hills, IL 60010; James and Carol Ingles, P.O. Box 2161, Waukegan, WI 53187; Charles and Lois Kalmbach, 7435 N. Braeburn Ln., Glendale, WI 53209; Kalmbach Profit Sharing-401k Savings Plan & Trust, P.O. Box 1812, Waukegan, WI 53187; James & Elizabeth King, 3874 Quail Ridge Dr., Brevard Beach, FL 33438; Malvika Family Ltd. Partnership/Trust, Estacion Village, 3539 Walnut Ave., #375, Camarillo, CA 93608; George Steven Malvika, 4754 Marlborough Way, Carmichael, CA 95608; Mundschau Revocable Trusts, R24 W30420 Crystal Springs Dr., Pewaukee, WI 53072; Daniel & Mary Murphy, 705 Heathway Ln., Naples, FL 34108; Robert, Inc., P.O. Box 2388, Jackson, WI 83001; David M. Thornburgh Trust, 7555 SW 75th Ave., Miami, FL 33143 • 11. Known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities: None • 12. Tax status (for completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at special rates): Has not changed during the preceding 12 months • 13. Publication title: CLASSIC TRAINS • 14. Issue date for circulation data below: Fall (September) 2010 • 15. Extent and nature of circulation:

	Average No. copies each issue during preceding 12 months	Actual No. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date
a. Total number of copies (net press run)	90,283	91,832
b. Paid and/or requested circulation		
1) Paid or requested mail subscriptions	35,756	38,247
2) Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors, and counter sales	24,060	24,321
c. Total paid and/or requested circulation (sum of 15a1 and 15a2)	59,816	62,568
d. Free distribution by mail (samples, complimentary, and other free)	41	41
e. Total free distribution	41	41
f. Total distribution (sum of 15c and 15e)	59,857	62,609
g. Copies not distributed	30,426	29,223
h. Total sum of 15f and 15g	90,283	91,832
i. Percent paid (15c divided by 15f times 100)	99.93%	99.93%

16. Publication of statement of ownership: Publication required. Printed in the Spring (March) 2011 issue of this publication. • 17. I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete. Kevin P. Keefe, Publisher. Date: September 30, 2010

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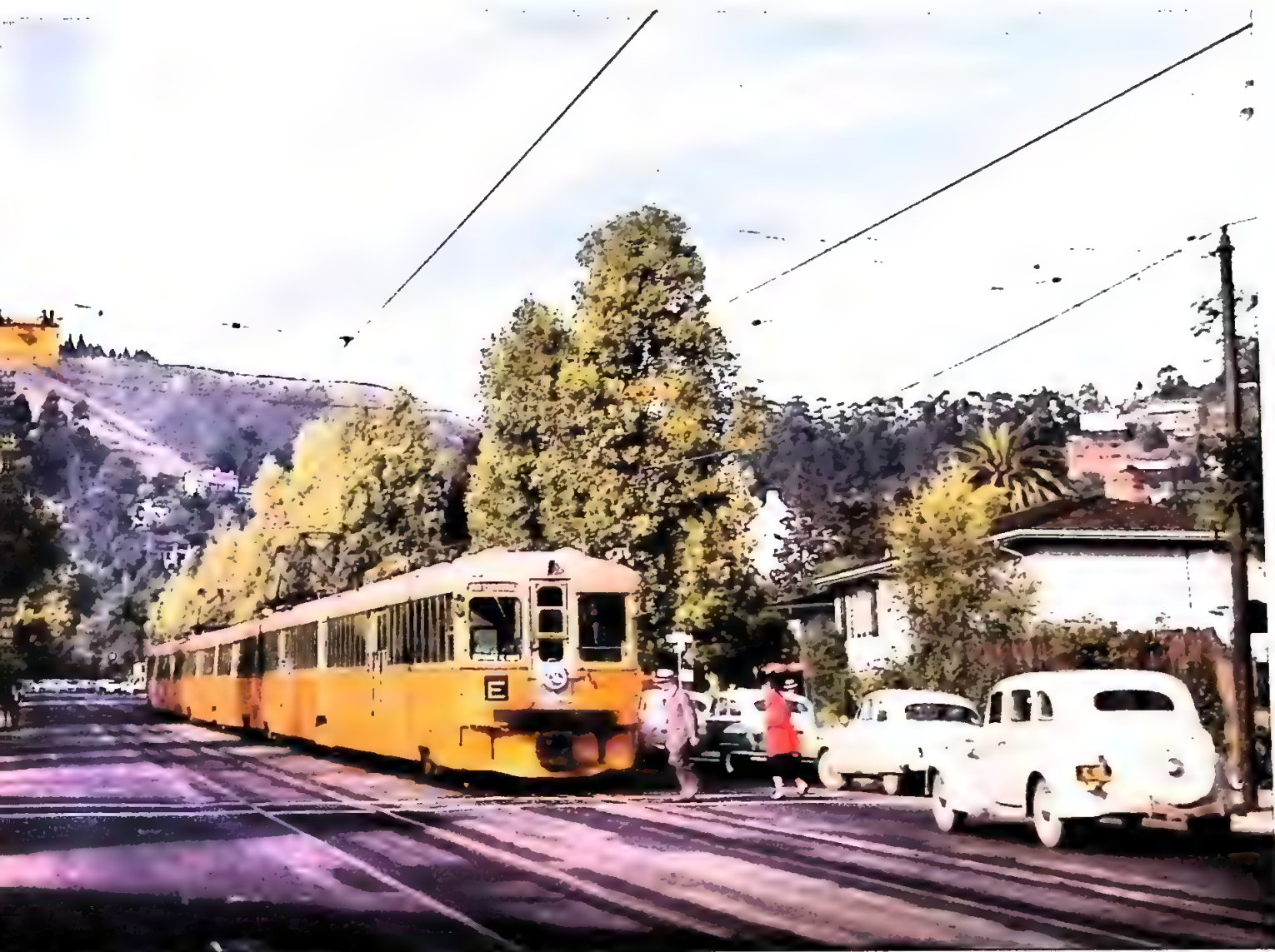
Key System's prescient but flawed Bridge Units

From its opening in 1903, the San Francisco, Oakland & San Jose Consolidated Railway used "Key Route" as a slogan. A 1912 merger of that East Bay interurban operation with local streetcar lines produced the San Francisco-Oakland Terminal Railway, which modified the moniker to *Key System*. Reorganization as Key System Transit Co. in 1924 made the name official. At its peak, the Key's empire spanned from Richmond south through Berkeley, Emeryville, and Oakland to Melrose, all funneling to a mile-long pier that led to a nine-track, three-slip ferry terminal on the bay. The Key's ferry fleet was idled in January 1939 with the opening of the Bridge Railway on the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge, enabling Key trains to run directly to a new terminal in San Francisco. (Trains of SP's Interurban Electric Railway and the Sacramento Northern also used the bridge before those services quit in 1941.) For the new transbay operations, Key System devised a plan to dismantle most of its existing, outdated cars and reuse

their components in a fleet of modern articulated units. Though not the first examples of the configuration, the Bridge Units foreshadowed the three-truck, two-carbody design so common on light-rail systems today. The Bridge fleet totaled 88 units, built in the Key's own shops and by St. Louis Car Co. and Bethlehem Steel's Wilmington, Del., plant. Alas, the Bridge Units suffered all their lives from insufficient power (only two trucks had motors, which were obsolete) and inadequate ventilation (windows were fixed, and there was no air conditioning). Bus-oriented National City Lines bought the Key in 1946, and rail operations ended April 20, 1958. At right, Bridge Unit 105 brings up the rear of an out-bound E Line train on Claremont Avenue at Webster Street in South Berkeley in September 1952. Out at the end of the E Line in the same month (lower right), No. 118 heads west at the Claremont Hotel. Below, No. 134 works a San Francisco-bound A Line run on Oakland's 12th Street at Lake Merritt on September 14, 1949.



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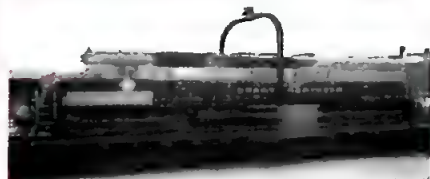
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Ready Track

First Out

Although many of the photos in this lavish new anthology have been published before, the context of this collection of David Plowden's black-and-white railroad images gives them fresh impact. The title suggests a tribute to steam locomotives, and the book contains plenty of stirring portraits of Great Northern 2-8-2's in northern Minnesota, and Canadian Pacific 4-6-4's and 4-6-2's in Quebec, and even some Colorado narrow gauge, most caught in the fleeting twilight of regular service. (Some of the locations conspire to show that Plowden is perhaps the greatest interpreter of steam in winter.)

But the requiem here is for more than locomotives, it's also for the entire industrial civilization that steam created. It shows up in Plowden's haunting images of a C&O water column in Thurmond, W.Va., or substantial bridges of the C&O or the P&LE, or in the industrial jumble of the Inland Steel mill in East Chicago, Ind., or in faded passenger depots on the C&E in Princeton, Ind., or the New Haven in Canaan, Conn. And certainly in one of the photographer's signature pictures, of the *Phoebe Snow* shrouded in steam at Scranton, Pa.

Not all of the pictures here are old friends, though. Some, such as the cover image of

REQUIEM FOR STEAM



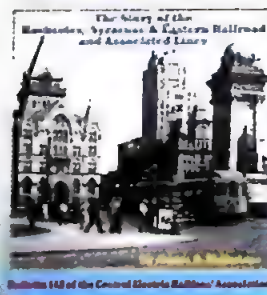
Central Vermont trains meeting, or three views of NP freights in Montana, have rarely, if ever, been published before. And the value here is not all in the photographs, for Plowden begins with a moving, 17-page introduction dealing principally with his 11th-hour experiences on the CPR (excerpted in our Spring 2010 issue).

Plowden's meticulously composed pictures—printed beautifully by Norton—bring dignity to subjects that, inevitably, conjure feelings of great loss.—Kevin P. Keefe

Requiem for Steam: The Railroad Photographs of David Plowden. By David Plowden. W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 500 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10110; (212) 354-5500; www.books.wwnorton.com/books/index.aspx; hardcover; 12 x 11 in.; 200 pages, 140 photographs; \$65.

Other Books

TRAVELECTRIC



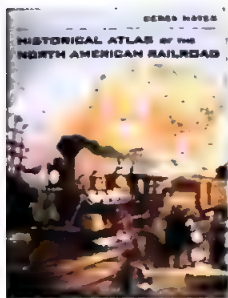
include overviews of the Beebe system, construction, cars, operations, and route-by-route descriptions of each segment of line. An appendix contains all-time equipment rosters for each line. This book is a well-written, thorough history of the multifaceted system. The many, well-reproduced photographs will be useful to any fan or modeler of interurban lines.—Jeff Wilson

TravElectric: The Story of the Rochester, Syracuse & Eastern Railroad and Affiliated Lines. By James R. McFarlane. Central Electric Railfans' Association, P.O. Box 503, Chicago, IL 60690; www.cera-chicago.org; 8 1/2 x 11 in.; 258 pages; hardcover; \$49 (\$39 for CERA members).

Steam authority Bob LeMassena has long advocated adding symbols to the Whyte classification system, so that an N&W Y6b articulated would be a "2-8+8-2" and a PRR T1 rigid-frame duplex would be a "4-4=4-4." As a coauthor of this book, he tinkers with steam nomenclature again by stretching "Decapod" to include *all* steam locomotives with 10 drivers, not just 2-10-0's. It's a novel concept, bringing together such diverse machines as 19th century 0-10-0's, high-wheeled 4-4-6-2's (sorry, Bob!), and 4-4-6-4 duplexes. An introduction gives an overview of the various wheel arrangements, followed by 138 pages of railroad-by-railroad detail. Thanks largely to coauthor Vollrath's vast photo collection, every class of "Decapod" on every railroad, including second-hand operators, is pictured. This allows one to, say, compare how the various owners of "Russian Decapods" customized those 2-10-0's to their individual tastes and requirements. Most photos are black-and-white roster shots, but a few fine color action views are interspersed as well. Roster and technical information is at the rear of this well-produced volume.—*Robert S. McGonigal*



Age of the Decapods. By Robert A. LeMassena and Harold K. Vollrath. Colorado Railroad Museum, P.O. Box 10, Golden, CO 80402; (800) 365-6263; coloradorailroadmuseum.org; hardcover; 8 1/2 x 10 1/2 in.; 204 pages; \$59.95.



This fascinating illustrated trip through the history of North America's railroads includes nearly 400 maps covering railroads from the early 1800s through today. The bulk of the maps were published by various carriers, and many others were distributed by the federal government or by individual states and territories. The maps nicely show how the continent's railroads developed and expanded along with westward migration. The book—far from a simple collection of maps—also features more than 150 color illustrations, including timetable covers, advertisements, and photos. There are also brief text histories of key lines, including Union Pacific, Canadian Pacific, and other early transcontinentals; railroads in the Civil War; other major carriers including the Pennsylvania, New York Central, and the Hill lines; mergers; and the coming of Amtrak. This atlas serves as a fascinating reference and is also just plain fun to browse through.—*J.W.*

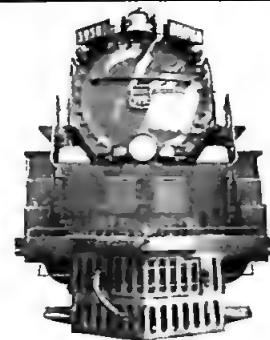
Historical Atlas of the North American Railroad. By Derek Hayes. University of California Press, 2120 Berkeley Way, Berkeley, CA 94704-1012; www.ucpress.edu; 9 1/2 x 12 1/2 in.; 224 pages; hardcover; \$39.95.

DVD's

Mere adjectives don't seem up to the task of describing the West Side Lumber Co.'s railroad, nestled in the Sierra Nevada of northern California, so here are a few cold facts: The air-line distance between its endpoints was 18 miles, but the railroad consumed 70 miles in connecting them; some curves measured 60 degrees; tangents were so rare that a point located on one of those exceptions was named Straight Track. Needless to say, the West Side's gauge was narrow (3 feet) and its locomotives geared (mostly Shays), but perhaps the most remarkable fact of all is that it lasted until 1960. This superb program, formed of color and black-and-white films with narration, music, on-screen captions, maps, and expert sound dubbing, examines myriad aspects of the West Side during its final 20 years. We see the recovery of wrecked equipment and logs, men joining cars with link-and-pin couplers, an engine "running around" a car on a stub-end siding by the ingenious use of a cable, and routine operations that no amount of FRA or OSHA waivers would permit today. The sequences of Shays bucking snow must be seen to be believed.—*R.S.M.*



West Side: Slim Gauge Logging in Tuolumne County. Tuolumne Films, produced in association with Catenary Video Productions, P.O. Box 1084, Harriman, NY 10926; (800) 343-5550; www.catenaryvideo.com; 90 minutes; \$29.95 plus \$6 shipping.



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Wabash steam lasted beyond the 2-6-0's

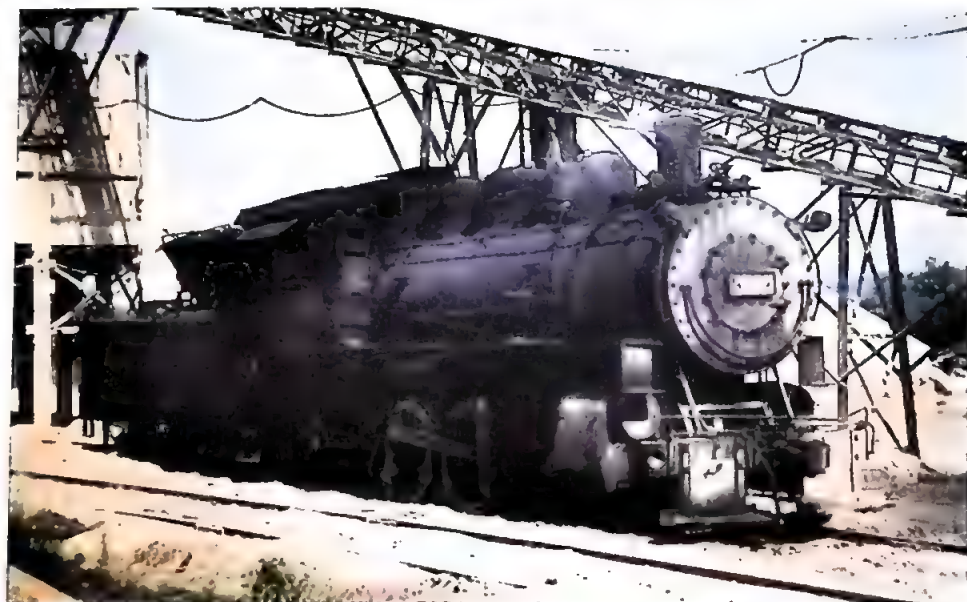
A fund-raising effort is under way to dress up Mogul 573 at St. Louis' Museum of Transportation

Although everyday Wabash Railroad steam did finally succumb when the last of the "Bluffs Moguls" [pages 55-57] was retired in 1955, it was possible to see a Wabash locomotive—a lowly 0-6-0—in steam for at least four more years, looking more or less as it had in its last days of service on the Class 1. The site was a gravel pit at Glencoe, Mo., west of St. Louis near Eureka—Missouri Aggregates—where the color slide at right of the engine, No. 557, was taken in June 1959. Wisps of smoke waft from the stack, and original "Wabash" lettering and "557" numerals still adorn the cab and tender flanks, respectively. So perhaps this little goat was the *real* last Wabash steam survivor to work. (The gravel pit also stabled sister Wabash 0-6-0 No. 540.)

Regarding the "dowdy" appearance of Mogul 573 at St. Louis' Museum of Transportation [page 56], the St. Louis Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society has undertaken a fund-raising effort to provide the money necessary for a cosmetic restoration of the engine, and is being assisted by the Wabash Railroad Historical Society. They have passed the halfway mark of their \$11,000 goal, WRHS President Gary Roe says, but have not reached it. For further information, contact any of the three groups: www.stlouisnrhs.org; www.wabashrhs.org; and www.transportmuseumassociation.org.

In researching my N&W "Hawkeye" and Wabash 2-6-0 stories in this issue, I reconnected with my Central Illinois past of 40-plus years ago, thanks to the Internet and a revived WRHS. Those paths, plus longtime friends Dick Wallin and Chet French, got me in touch with my engineer pal Kenny Davis, now retired and busy with his backyard live-steam railroad near Decatur, and with Van McCullough of Jacksonville (the town where I attended college), who fired the 2-6-0's as a young man and is now retired from a career in the clergy.

Last summer, another friend, Dale Jenkins, a retired Norfolk Southern police officer, invited me to ride an Operation Lifesaver special train out of Decatur. (Dale's first love among railroads is the Illinois Terminal, his employer until N&W took it over in 1981; Dale spearheads the Illinois Traction Soci-



R. R. "Dick" Wallin

Former Wabash 0-6-0 No. 557 (above) lasted in steam near St. Louis until at least 1959. On board an NS Operation Lifesaver special in July 2010 were (at right, from left), Van McCullough, Kenny Davis, and Dick Wallin.



Two photos, J. David Ingles

ety, the IT's historical group). For some on board, these special trains can turn into as much a social occasion as a safety initiative review, and lo, who should be among the passengers but both Kenny Davis and Van McCullough! Naturally, our conversation centered on the Wabash, whose former main line we rode west to Griggsville, Ill. Such can be the value of myriad gatherings of "the faithful," railroaders active as well as retired, plus those of us who observe the scene from track-side.—*Dave Ingles*

The Night Crawler's colorful first class

Author Stan Rhine enjoyed his coach rides on the Burlington Route's "Night Crawler" [pages 34-40], but during the mid-1960s trips that he amalgamated

into the composite trek told in the story, he just missed Pullman service on the trains, which ended in 1964. (He first rode the Crawler in 1954 but has no memory of a sleeping car being on the train.) Hol Wagner of Denver, a CB&Q historian who has known the author for decades, cites this "colorful" 1960s history of Pullmans on trains 29 and 30:

"Into the early 1960s, up through the May-October 1963 timetable, Nos. 29 and 30 had daily sleeping-car service between Denver and Casper; first-class service had been eliminated north of Greybull in 1957 and north of Casper in 1959. Until 1960 the regularly assigned sleepers were modernized heavyweight 8-section/3-compartment/1-drawing-room Tower-series cars, including *Zephyr Tower* and *Rocket Tower*, which were from the original *Zephyr-Rocket*. (*Zephyr Tower* was on No. 30 in the head-on collision with Colorado & Southern

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Spring Edition

freight No. 77 at Broomfield, Colo., in September 1958.) Next to be assigned were CB&Q-owned 4-section/7-duplex-roomette/3-double-bedroom, 1-compartment *River-series* cars (painted in Great Northern colors), most often *Poplar River* and *Sheyenne River*.

"Effective with the November 1963–April 1964 timetable, however, Pullman service became triweekly between Denver and Casper, using a 6-section/6-roomette/4-double-bedroom car. Different sleepers then were assigned, but among those seen were stainless-steel Boston & Maine cars *Dartmouth College I* and *II* and Louisville & Nashville's *Loblolly Pine*."

All those foreign-road sleepers added a note of color to the Crawler.—J.D.I. ■

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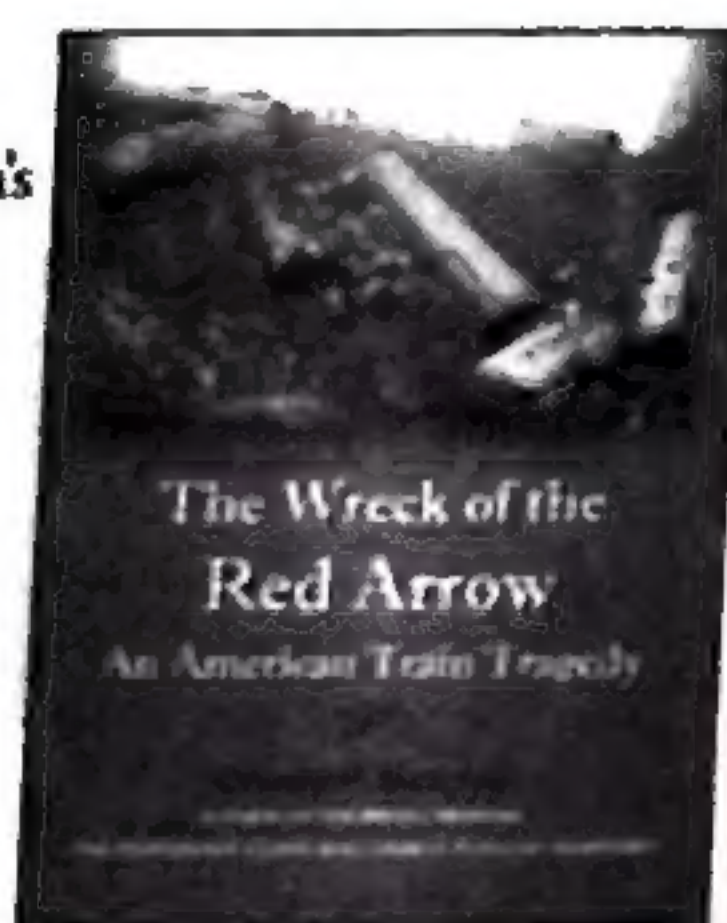
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Contrasts in Reno

Two generations of passenger trains share Southern Pacific's Reno, Nev., station in 1947. In the foreground is Virginia & Truckee Railway mixed train 2, scheduled to depart at 7:45 a.m., for Carson City and Minden. The wooden, open-platformed car carrying the marker flags is V&T No. 18, built by Barney & Smith in 1890 as a coach and converted to a combine in 1939. Making its Reno station stop just to the north is SP train 27, the *San Francisco Overland Limited* from Chicago, direct descendant of the original Union Pacific-Central Pacific transcontinental service of 1869. (As the lettering in its flank indicates, the *Overland's* lead locomotive, 1946-built UP E7 907A, was acquired for the streamliner *City*

of San Francisco, but the era of specialized diesel assignments is drawing to a close.) The V&T's daily-except-Sunday mixed lasted until May 31, 1950, when the entire 46-mile railroad shut down. Like many other pieces of V&T rolling stock, combine 18 is preserved at the Nevada State Railroad Museum in Carson City. UP sent the E7 to EMD as trade-in for an E9A in 1962. Part of the V&T has been relaid for tourist trains, but not the Reno-Minden segment. Although SP's 1926 Reno depot still stands, and is in use by Amtrak's *California Zephyr*, this location has changed completely, thanks to the recent project that lowered the mainline tracks into a trench through "The Biggest Little City in the World." ■

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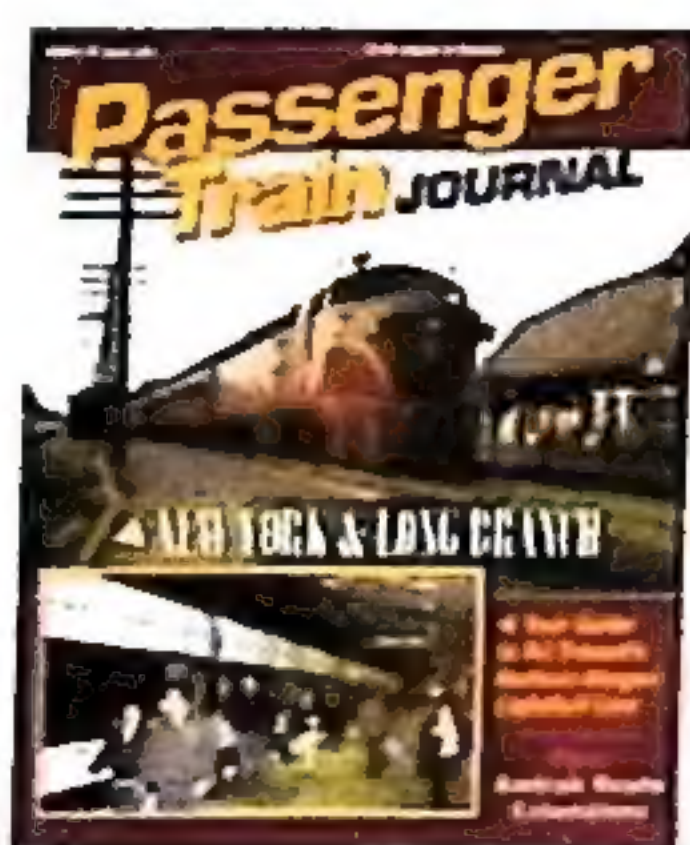
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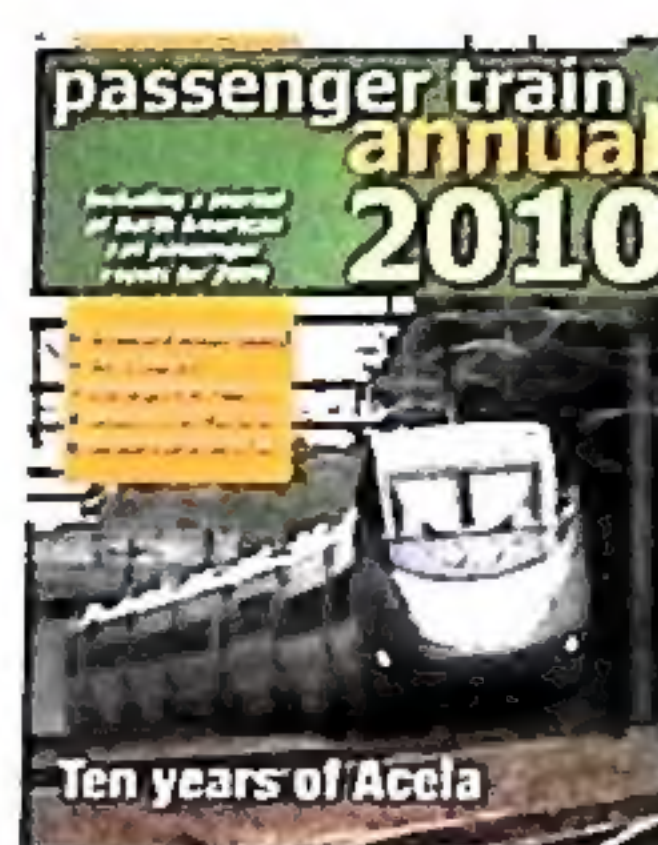
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